Handbooks of Catholic Faith and Practice

EDITED BY W. J. SPARROW SIMPSON, D.D.

CATHOLIC OR ROMAN CATHOLIC?

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TWELVE LETTERS TO ONE UNSETTLED
IN THE ENGLISH CHURCH

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I

The Point at Issue

LET me at once say how much I sympathize with you in all you tell me about your dissatisfaction with the English Church. You say we are so divided ; one bishop says one thing, another says another ; one parish has one " use," another a different one ; there seems to be no central authority speaking decisively on questions that perplex ; by one priest you are told you ought to make your Confession, another offers to help you with his advice, but " does not hold with sacramental Confession " ; in one parish you are bidden to pray for your Dead ; in another you are told it is " Romish " to do so ; you scarcely ever hear our Lady mentioned, apart from the Holy Scriptures, and rarely have the chance of visiting the Blessed Sacrament, and so forth.

Now if you had left it at that I might have taken these grounds of dissatisfaction one by one, and tried to reassure you that, despite these irregu-

larities, the English Church is Catholic; that her bishops are in the succession of the Apostles, and consequently that she has a valid Ministry and valid Sacraments; and that, this being the case, you are within the sphere of Grace, and can afford to disregard the erratic opinions of individuals. But you do not stop at dissatisfaction with the English Church. You tell me that the disorders you complain of have caused you to look to Rome as offering you an alternative to all that distresses you where you are. This compels me to deal with the claims of Rome at the outset.

What I want you to see is that all your grounds of dissatisfaction with the English Church do not afford ground for joining the Church of Rome. You will only be received into the Roman Church if you are convinced of the truth of a certain belief about the Bishop of Rome, or, as he is commonly called, the Pope.

What is that belief? This: that the Pope is the successor of St. Peter, whom our Lord made His Vicar; consequently that the true Church is formed only of those who are in communion with the Pope.

If you are absolutely convinced of the truth of this belief you ought to become a Roman Catholic even if the English Church were perfection itself. If you are not convinced of this, then all your dissatisfaction with the English Church, however just it may be, is no ground for joining the Roman.

I am quite sure that any Roman priest would bear me out in saying this. Rome does not want

people who go to her simply because they are perplexed or repelled by things in their own communion.

I want you to realize the difference between being dissatisfied with the English Church, and being convinced that the Roman Church is the only true Church. You want to go to Rome, if you go at all, not because the Church of England is faulty, but because the Church of Rome is the only Church there is, and because there is nothing for you to do if you are to save your soul but to join her.

I hope I have made this point quite clear? Let us forget for the present all about the disorders in the English Church. Rome makes a most tremendous claim upon us. If that claim holds good, we need not trouble ourselves about anything else; it is our clear duty to submit to her. If it does not hold good, we can then discuss calmly the things that distress you where you are.

II

The Claim of Rome

I AM glad you see my point. Of course different people approach Rome from different sides; but all have to go in at one gate. The question Rome puts to us is not: Do you want Reservation? or, Won't your clergyman hear confessions? or, Do you miss the cultus of the Saints? or, Do you pine for incense? or, Do you long to light votive candles? or, Do you admire our missionary zeal? or our devotions? or our unity? The one question Rome puts to all who approach her, no matter in what way they have been attracted, is: Do you believe the Pope to be the Vicar of Christ, that he exercises by Divine Right an absolute authority, and consequently that to be of the Church of Christ at all, you must be in communion with him?

You tell me you have a copy of the Larger Catechism prescribed by Pope Pius X for all the dioceses in the Province of Rome. If you will turn to page 44 of that Catechism, you will find these words:

"To be a member of the Church it is necessary to be baptized, to believe and profess the doctrine of Jesus Christ; to participate in the same sacraments; and to

acknowledge the Pope and other lawful pastors of the Church."

Here, then, are four conditions of Church-membership : baptism, belief in the doctrine of Jesus Christ, participation in the sacraments, and *acknowledgment of the Pope.* Now when we turn to the Acts of the Apostles to learn what were the conditions of Church-membership on the Day of Pentecost, we read that those who were baptized " continued stedfastly in the Apostles doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in the prayers " (ii. 41, 42). You notice that one of the conditions was continuance in the doctrine and fellowship of the *Apostles* : the word is plural. We do not read that they continued in the doctrine and fellowship of St. Peter. Now if, in order to be a member of the Church to-day, it is essential to acknowledge the successors of Peter, how much more necessary it must have been at Pentecost to acknowledge *Peter* ! Should we not expect the record to say : " they all continued stedfastly in Peter's doctrine and fellowship " ? On the other hand, if the record stands : "they all continued stedfastly in the doctrine and fellowship of the Apostles," must not that condition to-day be an acknowledgment of the doctrine and fellowship of the successors of all the Apostles, and not of the successor of one apostle only ? In the difference between the way this condition of Church-membership is stated in the *Acts* and the way in which Rome has rendered it, we see the fundamental difference between the Catholic Church

and the Roman Catholic. The one is an Apostolic Church; the other is a Petrine Church. Now, in the Creed we are not required to assent to a Petrine Church, but an Apostolic Church: "I believe one catholic apostolic Church." Moreover, in the Epistle to the Ephesians, in one of the several places where we are reminded of this condition of Church-membership, we are told that we are "built upon the foundation of the *Apostles*" (ii. 20), not upon the foundation of Peter; consequently we have a right to-day to expect this condition of Church-membership to consist in our being built on the foundation of the successors of the Apostles, not on that of the successor of Peter.

Evidently, then, according to Rome, a great change has come over the constitution of the Church: it is no longer Apostolic, in the sense of being framed on the doctrine and fellowship of all the apostles and their successors, but only upon the successor of one of the Apostles. In other words, it is not apostolic; it is Petrine. When did this change in the constitution of the Church take place?

To answer that question we shall have to go to history. Before doing so, however, it seems only fair to hear what Rome has to say in support of her own rendering of this very important condition of Church-membership. And let me remind you in passing that it is an important condition. We can have no quarrel with "acknowledgment of . . . lawful pastors of the Church" as a *sine quâ non* of membership with the Church, since there must be

some authoritative "doctrine and fellowship" on which to compact a society like the Church. The point at issue is whether that compacting framework is supplied by acknowledgment of the successors of one of the Apostles, or, as we are certainly led to believe in Holy Scripture, of those of all the Apostles.

Now, what reason does Rome assign for resting the whole Church on the successor of one of the Apostles? Turning again to the Larger Catechism, you will find on page 51, and the following pages, a series of statements about the Pope which constitute the ground of the claim she makes, and which you need to consider most carefully if you contemplate becoming a Roman Catholic. For convenience sake I will put them down here as they stand:

"The Pope, whom we call the Supreme Pontiff, and also the Roman Pontiff, is the successor to St. Peter, the Vicar of Jesus Christ on earth, and the Visible Head of the Church.

"The Roman Pontiff is the successor to St. Peter because St. Peter united in his own person the dignity of the Bishop of Rome and Head of the Church; established at Rome by Divine disposition his Seat, and died there. Hence, whoever is elected Bishop of Rome is heir to all his authority.

"The Roman Pontiff is Vicar of Jesus Christ because he represents Him on earth, and fills His place in the government of the Church.

"The Roman Pontiff is the Visible Head of the Church because he governs her with the self-same authority of Jesus Christ Who is her invisible Head.

"The true Church is called *Roman* because the four marks of Unity, Sanctity, Catholicity, and Apostolicity are found only in the Church which acknowledges as her Head the Bishop of Rome, the Successor to St. Peter.

"All who do not acknowledge the Roman Pontiff as their Head do not belong to the Church of Jesus Christ."

Here, then, is the reason which Rome assigns for resting the whole Church on the successor of one of the Apostles. This is the ground of the claim Rome makes. The propositions are so admirably clear that it is scarcely possible to throw them into simpler form. However, for the purpose of examination we may say that they yield the following claims:

(1) That supreme authority was given to St. Peter by our Lord;
(2) and to St. Peter's successors;
(3) that St. Peter became Bishop of Rome;
(4) therefore, that whoever is elected Bishop of Rome is heir to all his authority;
(5) therefore, that the whole Church is bound to conform to the reigning Bishop of Rome;
(6) therefore, that the whole Church is Roman;
(7) therefore, conversely, those who do not submit to the Bishop of Rome are outside the Church of Jesus Christ.

Now, I want you to consider these seven points carefully. You will notice that the last four follow on the admission of the first three. Or, to be more exact, 4 is the conclusion of 1, 2, and 3; and 5, 6, and 7 are extensions of 4.

It is 1, 2, and 3 that are the really important points. Yet they are not equally important. If, for example, we find that 3 holds good, and that St. Peter did actually become bishop of Rome, that fact will not make in favour of the Roman claim unless we can prove that supreme authority

was given to St. Peter and his successors. Granted we can do that, it then becomes of importance to know what was St. Peter's relation to the Church in Rome. Further, I think we may grant that whatever authority was given St. Peter was by implication given to his successors [1] also. So that the only point in the whole seven which is of first-rate importance is the first, namely, that supreme authority was given to St. Peter by our Lord. To this proposition the whole of the condition of Church-membership peculiar to the Roman Catholics reduces itself. It now remains for us to turn this proposition into a question, and ask: Was supreme authority given to St. Peter by our Lord?

This is the question I leave you to consider in the light of what you are told in the Larger Catechism, and what you know of the history of the Apostles.

[1] This is a point not usually conceded by Anglican writers, but it would seem rather cavilling to object to it. True, in the Canons of Rome it is said that "if the privilege is personal, it follows the person, not the office, and it dies with the person named in it," but the distinction between "personal" and "official" in the case of any of the apostles is likely to land us in difficulties; and besides, in the silence of Scripture on the whole subject of succession, the Church has always inferred an extension of the apostolic functions to their successors.

III

The Ground of the Claim

YES, of course there is much to be said for the *advantage* of one supreme authority in the Church on earth: though at the same time we must remember that the Eastern Orthodox Church has preserved her faith and unity without any such central authority. But the *advantage* of the Papal authority is not the real point between Rome and ourselves. Rome does not ask us merely to believe that it is *better* to have one supreme authority in the Church; Rome asks us to believe that the Pope *is* the one supreme authority *by Divine Right.*

I think that this is what you and those who, like yourself, are looking to Rome rather fail to see. You seem to think that an admission of the *desirability* of a central authority is equivalent to accepting the Roman position. But the two are quite distinct. To deem a thing desirable is quite different from being convinced that it exists. The distinction is that technically known as between the *bene esse* and the *esse.* It is the latter to which Rome requires your assent: not to the mere advantage of

the papacy, but the actual fact that the Papacy exists by Divine Right.

The distinction is well put by the late Fr. Maturin in the *Price of Unity*, a book which, by the way, I would strongly advise you to get and study as one of the most fair-minded and cautious contributions to the subject from the Roman Catholic side. It is evident to me that you have been dissatisfied with the facts adduced in the Larger Catechism in evidence of the Petrine Claim, and have been turning over in your mind arguments from expediency and probability. You mention in your letter Mr. Scholfield's *Divine Authority*, and you quote him as saying: "If GOD has given to man a revelation of Himself . . . if He has given a religion whereby man is to be instructed in His truths as well as united to Himself, *there must needs be* in the world, through all time, a Teacher appointed by, and representing, Himself. This Teacher must be endowed with such infallibility as shall secure the permanence, the incorruption, and the continual application and interpretation of the truth He has revealed."[1] Now, what is there that we might conceivably *want* to prove, that could not be proved in this way! Mr. Scholfield's "there must needs be" is simply a way of putting Mr. Scholfield's own opinion. You will find that arguments from "probability" are usually a rather plausible way for expressing a writer's own opinion. But the question before us is not one of probability or expediency at all; it is simply one of fact.

[1] J. F. Scholfield, *Divine Authority*, p. 117.

We have it stated as a fact that to Peter and his successors was committed supreme authority in the Church by Divine Right. Very well; then if this is a fact, where is it found? We had better return to the Larger Catechism.

"Why do you say that the Roman Pontiff is the Universal Pastor of the Church?

"Because Jesus Christ said to Peter, the first Pope, 'Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church, and I will give to thee the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in Heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in Heaven.' And He said again, 'Feed My lambs, feed My sheep.'"

These are the "facts" as supplied by the Larger Catechism. That Catechism deems them sufficient. So also does the Vatican Decree by which the Roman Claim is promulgated, and which calls these quotations "this plain teaching of Holy Scripture," proving that "a primacy of jurisdiction over the universal Church of God was promised and given immediately and directly to blessed Peter the apostle by Christ the Lord."

It is almost a wonder that a third passage is not added in the Catechism and the Decree, since it usually is employed by Roman Catholic writers,[1] namely, our Lord's words to Peter as recorded in St. Luke xxii. 32: "When thou art converted,

[1] As, e.g., the late T. W. Allies, *See of Peter*, pp. 95 ff; he interprets the words "When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren" as the "power of confirming his brethren because his own faith should never fail"! Did Allies never hear of the Denial of Peter?

strengthen thy brethren." However, perhaps the fact that this last text was not pressed into the service of the Roman Claim until the close of the twelfth century accounts for its omission in these formularies.

Let us consider the first two: St. Matthew xvi. 18, 19; St. John xxi. 15–17. These are what are usually known as "the Petrine Texts": and, be it noted, they are the whole of the *facts* given us in support of the Claim. The second of these was never applied to the Papal Supremacy till the end of the seventh century. St. Gregory Nazianzen, commenting on the words: "Feed My lambs; feed My sheep," says, "Jesus received him (Peter), and by the triple questioning and confession He healed the triple denial."[1] St. Cyril of Alexandria has a long passage on the text in which he says: "But by the Lord's saying, 'Feed My sheep,' a renewal, as it were, of the *apostolate* already conferred upon him, is understood to have taken place, wiping away the intervening reproach of his falls and destroying utterly the littleness of soul arising from human infirmity."[2] These are two representative passages giving us the general sense of the Fathers as to the significance of this text. Its unforced and natural meaning is a gracious and loving permission on the part of our Lord for the failing disciple to resume his work with the rest.

[1] *Orat.* xxxix. § xviii., *Opp.* ed. Ben., i. 689.

[2] *In St. Joann.*, lib. xii. cap. i., ed. Phil. Pusey, 1871, iii. 164–166.

This reduces the facts on which the "Claim" rests to one text, St. Matthew xvi. 18, 19. Unfortunately this text is ambiguous. What did our Lord mean by "this rock"? Did He mean Peter, or did He mean Peter's faith, or did He mean Himself? Read the whole passage carefully, and you will see that the words are capable of any one of those interpretations.

When I say "unfortunately," I am thinking of the Roman Claim, because Rome has committed herself to the rule that no dogma can be based on a passage of Scripture unless that passage has a uniform interpretation by the Fathers. The Fathers felt the ambiguity as much as you or I, for out of ninety-five passages in which they comment on the text they give as many as five different interpretations. St. Augustine held three interpretations of it at different times in his life.

Now think what this means: it means more than a want of agreement among the Fathers as to the meaning of the expression "this rock"; it means that they were entirely unaware of the significance Rome has given it! If by "this rock" our Lord had meant St. Peter and his successors, is it possible that the majority in a Church guided by the Holy Spirit should have said that "this rock" meant Peter's faith, not Peter himself! Yet that is what the majority of the Fathers do say. Remember what it is we have before us in this passage: if, as De Maistre says, "the sovereign pontiff is the necessary, only, and exclusive foundation of Christianity . . . the capital dogma without which Christianity

cannot subsist,"[1] then we are dealing in this passage, as Cardinal Bellarmine says, "with the principal matter of Christianity" (*de summa rei Christianae*). We are dealing with the sole passage upon which everything is built; and yet for centuries the accredited teachers of the Church treat it differently, and seem wholly unaware of its tremendous import (according to Rome !).

If you want to see for yourself the various senses in which the Fathers use this passage you cannot do better than read the third chapter of Father Puller's *Primitive Saints and the See of Rome.*[2] In any case I would urge you to get and study that work, the learning and fairness of which has been acknowledged by Roman Catholics.

Here, then, is our first conclusion. According to the majority of the Fathers, the expression "this rock" does not mean Peter, but the faith of the Apostles. I say "of the Apostles": not of Peter only; for look at the question by which Christ drew forth this confession of faith: "He saith unto *them*, But whom say *ye* that I am?" (ver. 15). The question was put to all the Apostles. Peter answers as spokesman of the rest. The verdict is given by the foreman of the jury, but the verdict is that of all, the responsibility is that of all, and the sentence is based on the responsibility of all. Peter's function as spokesman of the rest was part of his

[1] *Du Pape, Discours Prélim.*, i. 13, and iv. 5, quoted by Allies, *The Church of England cleared from Schism*, 2nd edit., p. 358, n.

[2] Longmans & Co.

natural forwardness, the impetuosity which his character consistently bears from first to last, whether in acknowledging his Master *or denying Him*, whether confessing His Divinity, or proffering counsel which draws from the Master's lips the rebuke "Get thee behind me, *Satan*."[1] They all believed; Peter expressed their belief. Thus the deliberate confession of those whom Jesus had been training for two years and a half was the "rock" on which He could build. It means, in Dr. Scott Holland's phrase, that He had "dug down below the loose and shifting rubble"[2] of excited opinion, and interested enthusiasm, to the "rock" of a personal conviction of His Claims. On *this* He could build, because it was something Divine, imperishable. "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in Heaven." It was man's response to truth Divinely taught. Against such truth the "gates" or "counsels" of Hell could not prevail. Upon faith in His Divine Sonship Christ could build His Church.

Now this gives us the key to all that we subsequently find in the Epistles about Christ Himself being the "foundation."[3] It is nonsense to speak of a building having two foundations; but if *Peter* were the foundation here intended, then the Church would have two foundations. If, on the other hand, the foundation here is the *faith of the Apostles*

[1] Significantly, in this same chapter of St. Matthew, *vv.* 22, 23.

[2] *Creed and Character*, pp. 46–49.

[3] 1 Cor. iii. 11, etc.

as expressed by Peter, faith in Christ as the Incarnate Son of GOD, then there is no contradiction, for Christ and faith in Christ are only two ways of looking at the same thing. And so St. Paul can say that "other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, Jesus Christ," and also that "we are built upon the foundation of the apostles"; St. John can consistently rest the whole Heavenly life on the "belief that Jesus Christ is the Son of GOD," and yet tell us that in the foundations of the Heavenly City he saw "the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb."[1] So you see that the confession of St. Peter, the sole passage on which Rome tries to base her claims, brings us round to what we saw in my last letter, namely, that the Church is apostolic, not Petrine.

But you will ask me: If this is the meaning of the expression, "this rock," what do you say of the words which follow in St. Matthew xvi., and which seem to be addressed to St. Peter alone?—"I will give unto thee the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in Heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in Heaven."

Now in regard to this, you will notice that the latter words, about "binding and loosing" are repeated on two distinct occasions to *all* the apostles, once, very soon after they had been spoken to Peter, and again after our Lord was risen from the dead.[2] This repetition makes it clear beyond all doubt that

[1] *Cf.* 1 St. John v. 1–5, and Rev. xxi. 14.

[2] See St. Matt. xviii. 18; St. John xx. 22, 23.

the words are a part of our Lord's delegation of spiritual authority to all His Apostles. With regard to the "keys" the meaning is not quite so clear. Different Fathers interpret the promise differently, but all are of one mind with Origen [1] that whatever is especially meant by "the keys," the power is one which all the apostles shared with St. Peter. "Are the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven given to Peter only, and shall no other of the blessed men receive them?" [2]

In fact, the meaning of the additional words to St. Peter in St. Matthew xvi. 19 cannot better be summed up than by Father Puller in the book I have already mentioned:—

"We know that St. Peter *and the other apostles* are the foundations of the Church, because he and they are co-founders of the Church. What is there to make us suppose that he is also a foundation of the Church in some totally different sense, of which we have no trace elsewhere in the

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[1] *In Matt.*, tom. xii. 11. The remainder of the passage should be noted: "And if the words, 'I will give thee the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven' are common to the others, how are not all the words, said before and said after, said, as they seem to be to Peter, also common to the others? For in this place the words 'Whatsoever thou shalt bind, etc,' seem as if they were spoken to Peter. But in the Gospel of St. John, the Saviour, giving the Holy Spirit, says, 'Receive *ye* the Holy Ghost, etc.'"

With this agree Cyril, Theophylact, Chrysostom, and in the West, Cyprian, Optatus, Augustine. See Gore, *The Roman Claim*, pp. 86–90; also *The Church and the Ministry*, pp. 38 ff, and 222 f.

[2] See art., "The Promise of the Keys to Peter," by Dr. Sparrow Simpson, *English Church Review*, July, 1913.

Bible? If we look to the last clause of this promise, we shall find a signal confirmation of this view, that what was promised to St. Peter was to be actually conferred on all the apostles equally."[1]

You will find that this is borne out by the subsequent history as given in the *Acts of the Apostles* and in the *Epistles*. We read, "the Lord was adding unto *them* (not to Peter only) such as were being saved" (ii. 47). We do not read one word about the "supremacy" of Peter. We read that he was active at Pentecost, and at the Council at Jerusalem, and that he admitted Cornelius, the first Gentile convert, into the Church; but so were the other apostles active in their various labours, particularly St. Paul, whose work and organization, and *authoritative decisions* occupy about half the New Testament! Once this apostle comes into conflict with Peter on a matter affecting the subsequent career of the Church, and he is bold to say that he withstood him (Peter) to the face, *because he was to be blamed.*[2] Again, you find that nearly all the Epistles were written to correct some form of false teaching, yet never once is the "supreme authority of Peter" referred to as a final court of appeal. Strangest of all, if the Roman Claim were to hold good, St. Peter himself seems quite unaware that he has any authority above that of the rest. In his Epistle he modestly describes himself as "an elder," and says that such are not to be as lords over God's heritage.[3]

[1] *Primitive Saints and the See of Rome*, pp. 111, 112.
[2] Gal. ii. 11.
[3] 1 St. Pet. v. 1, 3.

Now, I hope I have made it clear that when we ask the question: Was supreme authority given by our Lord to St. Peter? first, that we are dealing not with a matter of supposition or probability or expediency, but solely with a question of fact; secondly, that when we go in search of facts to support Rome's answer to that question, not one atom of ground do we find for such a claim. Instead, we find overwhelming evidence, both from the words of our Lord, and from the records of His apostles, that authority was equally bestowed upon all those apostles and their successors. So that Peter and his successors were not supreme over James and John and their successors, neither had Rome any jurisdiction over Jerusalem, Antioch and Ephesus.

I hope that our consideration of the question has convinced you, not merely of the groundlessness of the Petrine Claim, but, of what is far more important, viz., of the Apostolic structure of the Church. It is that, and that alone, that is going to give you rest. And so I conclude this letter with the words of Origen: "'Upon this rock I will build My Church' was said of all of them, and of each single one of them."[1]

[1] *In Matt.*, tom. xii. 11.

IV

The History of the Claim (I)

YOU will do well to be a little on your guard as to what your Roman Catholic friends tell you about "development." The word is not so common with them now as it used to be. Since the use Modernism has made of the idea it has become too dangerous a line of explanation, and the Vatican has condemned its use in connexion with the Papal Supremacy.

Still, in a loose, popular sense Romans are still found to refer to "development" to explain the existence of what is not found in Holy Scripture, and the early Fathers. When they do so you will bear in mind that "development" can only apply to what has all along existed in the germ. You may, e.g., produce a rose from a hawthorn stock, or a pear from an apple stock, but you do not speak of rose or pear as developments of the old stock. They have been grafted on. Similarly, if we cannot find the germ of the Petrine Claim in the New Testament we cannot possibly speak of it as a "development" of the Church. It may have been superadded or grafted, and *then* have developed, but that does not make it a development of the original stock. So

that you will do well to challenge this word whenever you meet with it in Roman books or discussion with your friends.

However, you may well wonder how a belief in Papal Supremacy has come to be a *sine quâ non* of membership with the Church of Christ. I will do my best to sketch the history of its importation and growth. It is rather lengthy matter for a letter; I can do little more than supply the outline, and leave you to fill it in for yourself.

The local Church at Rome was organized in early times in precisely the same way as were the local churches in other cities. How the Gospel first appeared there is not known, but there is now no reason to doubt that St. Peter was in Rome some time after the Church was planted there, and that, together with St. Paul, he helped to build it up. It cannot be said that he was "bishop" of Rome, in the sense of having local jurisdiction, because none of the apostles had a local title. They travelled, confirming the churches, and exercising their functions wherever, in the Providence of God, they happened to be. Let us say, then, that St. Peter was resident for some time at Rome, and that, in common with St. Paul, he received the crown of martyrdom there. That is all we are warranted in saying about St. Peter's connexion with Rome.[1]

What we have to remember is that all the Sees (Jerusalem, Antioch, Ephesus, Alexandria, Rome,

[1] See on this subject Edmundson, *Church in Rome in the First Century*, pp. 47, 51–55, 118, 120, 284.

and elsewhere) were equal in status, because of their bishops being held to be successors of the Apostles. "The bishops receive by succession the very authority of the apostles, so that whatever the apostles had of episcopal power, that is, of power concerned with the government of the Church, has been transferred by them into the bishops, as their equal successors [1] in the Church's administration and government." [2] Nothing could modify this inherent equality. In process of time, however, while the equality remained, the *status* of the various bishops came to be modified by two influences: (*a*) by the political or geographical importance of the See; (*b*) by the association of the See with the apostles. It is obvious that bishops in great cities, like Alexandria, Antioch, Carthage, Rome, would exercise influence over a much wider area than would bishops in places like Thessalonica and Corinth. It is also obvious that Sees where the Church had been founded by apostles would become increasingly venerable. Where both these influences combined, as in the case of Jerusalem, Antioch, and Rome, a high degree of eminence would result.[3] Now Rome was, politically and geographically, the metropolis of the world; the See of Rome had also the glory of being associated with the two great apostles, SS. Peter and Paul. No wonder, then,

[1] On *The Principle of Succession*, see Dr. Sparrow Simpson, *English Church Review*, May, 1913.

[2] Van Espen, *Jus. Eccles. Univ.*, I. xvi. 1, 7.

[3] See Fr. Puller, *Primitive Saints and the See of Rome*, pp. 7–10.

that the Bishop of Rome came to be held in high esteem. When to these circumstances we add the generosity shown by Rome to poorer and persecuted churches, and the splendid triumph with which her own faith had emerged from the ordeal of persecution, we shall acknowledge that in this sense Rome had every title to eminence. At the same time we must be on our guard against exaggeration. While the status of bishops began to vary, their inherent equality remained. When, e.g., Cornelius, Bishop of Rome (250), writes to Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage, he begins his Letter: "Cornelius, to Cyprian, his *brother*, greeting." And when Cyprian replies, he writes in the same strain.[1] When, a hundred years before that, Polycarp went, of his own free will, to Rome to consult with Anicetus about the keeping of Easter, they were not able to agree, but agreed to recognize each other's independence, and partook of the Holy Communion together before separating.[2]

The causes of Rome's eminence are so plain on the surface that it seems absolutely wanton to ignore them and try to substitute an anachronism in their place. Nevertheless this is what modern Romans try to do. The Encyclical *Satis Cognitum* wilfully tries to twist Rome's geographical prominence into ecclesiastical supremacy. I give it you as an example of the way that Papal document of recent times is riddled with "cooked" quotations:

[1] Abp. Benson, *Cyprian*, p. 168.

[2] Irenæus, *ad Victor.*, quoted by Eusebius, *H.E.* v. 24, 11 ff; iv. 26, 3.

it cites Irenæus to this effect: "with this church (Rome), on account of its eminent authority, it is necessary that every church should be in accord." This the Encyclical calls "the most remarkable of the testimonies of antiquity" to the eminence of the Church at Rome. It is very remarkable, only, unfortunately, Irenæus did not make it. The correct translation of what Irenæus wrote is this: "To this church (Rome) on account of its pre-ëminence every church necessarily resorts, namely, the faithful from all quarters." [1] What he means plainly is that as Rome was the centre of the world, Christians from all quarters necessarily resorted thither.

We find the very same thing acknowledged as late as the Council of Chalcedon (451) when it was declared that the "Fathers properly gave the privileges to the throne of the elder Rome, *because that was the imperial city.*" The causes of Rome's eminence are plainly these four: its convenience as a city; its association with the apostles; its generosity; and the valour of its faith. These are sufficient to explain the status of the See and its Bishop; but they could not, nor could anything else give him supremacy over the other bishops, or make them unequal to him, where all were successors to an equal Apostolate.

So much I have said to explain the relations of the Sees at the first, and the cause of Rome's eminence.

[1] Iren., *Contra Hereses*, III. iii. 2.

Now let me try to indicate the stages by which the Roman See grew in influence.

I. The first instance of anything like aggression occurs about 194, when Victor, bishop of Rome, astonished Christendom by issuing an edict to excommunicate all churches that would not follow the Roman custom as to keeping Easter. Very different was Victor from his predecessor Anicetus, whose consultation with Polycarp on the same subject I have just noticed. Against this edict Irenæus remonstrated, reminding Victor that the churches he threatened had never been bound in any way to Rome, and "very severely upbraiding" him. Polycrates, who represented the threatened churches in Asia, wrote a most noble and affecting letter to the would-be despot which concluded thus:

"It is we who are faithful to tradition, and I who have lived sixty-five years in the Lord, who have conversed with brethren throughout the world, who have read the Holy Scriptures from end to end, shall not lose my self-possession whatever is done to frighten me. Greater than I have said, We ought to obey GOD rather than man. I can cite bishops here present who have come to see me, and have given adhesion to this my letter, knowing well that I do not wear white hairs for nothing, and who are assured that all I do I do in the Name of the Lord Jesus."

Victor's reply to this touching letter announced that the Asiatic churches were "utterly cut off from the communion." The other bishops of West as well as East, however, refused to withdraw their communion from Polycrates. Victor had "tried

it on" as we say, but it was too early yet for Rome to have her own way, and the attempt failed.

II. The second period, from 250 to 312, is marked by the appearance at Rome of legendary support for the kind of aggressive measures Victor tried to carry through. Chief among these was the legend of Peter's Chair, sometimes called "the Clementine Romance." This was a most bare-faced fabrication invented by a heretic for the purpose of discrediting St. Paul's teaching. In it St. Peter is represented as quarrelling with St. Paul's teaching, and consecrating St. Clement to be his successor in the See of Rome, to "sit in his own chair," that is to say, "chair of discourse," or, as we should say, *pulpit*. The legend makes St. Peter say that this "chair" was appointed him by our Lord, and this, as you have noticed, is incorporated into the Roman Catechism to-day! It is, of course, every bit of it, pure romance, and no one dreams to-day of treating it as a serious history. But the third century was more credulous, and the romance suited well the imperial city pervaded as it was by the temper of Victor. It stands foremost among those legendary assertions by which, as we shall see, the increasing aggression of Rome was destined to be backed up. Two protests of the Church outside Rome accompany this advance; that of Tertullian, who with fine irony mocks "the pretentious and pagan titles paraded by the bishops of Rome,"[1] and that of Firmilian, who exclaims in a letter to Stephen Bishop of Rome: "What grave sin hast thou not

[1] *Dr. Pudic*, i. 21.

brought upon thy head by separating thyself as thou hast done from so many churches!"

III. I must, very unwillingly, pass over the case of Cyprian and Victor which provoked the letter of Firmilian [1] from which I have just quoted, and come to the third period in the "development," marked by the conversion of Constantine, and the imperial recognition of Christianity. Let me remind you of Dante's words on this event:—

> Ah, Constantine, to how much ill gave birth
> Not thy conversion, but that plenteous dower
> Which the first wealthy Father gained from thee! [2]

Constantine styled himself an "exterior bishop," and claimed, like the pagan emperors, to unite in his own person, the rights of emperor and supreme pontiff. Here we see the beginnings of the "Temporal Power," and of the subsequent exaggerations of the official position of the bishops of Rome.

IV. The fourth landmark is the Division of the Empire which set Rome free to be the religious capital of the West. Against the beginnings of such a position the Councils of 381 and 451 raised a strong protest. They decreed that the bishop of Constantinople, or New Rome, held exactly the same authority as the Bishop of Rome, and in so doing they were simply following the fact of apostolical equality which we have seen to have been from the first the received teaching. It was impossible to

[1] Preserved in Cyprian's Epistles, 75. *c.* 25.

[2] *Inferno*, xix. 115–117.

disregard these Councils, and Rome had perforce to limit her claim of jurisdiction. At Sardica, however, she gained recognition as final ecclesiastical court of appeal for the West. This, however, was not gained without strong remonstrance.

V. The fifth period begins with the Invasion of Rome by Attila, and the conversion of the Huns under Gregory the Great. The coming of the Huns gave a new political aspect to Rome and the whole of the West, separating it more completely from the East (Constantinople), and preparing the way for the rapidly rising and changing kingdoms that gave us Mediaeval Europe. Gregory, indeed, stands between the ancient and the Mediaeval world, and it is in accordance with the dramatic character of history that so great a figure should appear in the dawn of the Modern world. It is here, too, that we are reminded for the first time of the religious history of our own race, for you remember how ardently Gregory desired to bring the Gospel to these shores, but, on being called to the See of Rome, was obliged to delegate the mission to Augustine of Canterbury. His own hands were full. The strong control of a wise and holy man like Gregory when Europe was in the making was indeed an instance of the greater aspects of the papacy. And it is all the more remarkable that Gregory himself gave no sort of countenance to the Papal Claim. He was strenuously opposed to the spirit of usurpation which had marked some of those who had gone before him. Let me give you some extracts from his Letters showing how far a

"pope" of the sixth century was from the spirit of the Vatican Decree and the Larger Catechism:

To Eulogius, Patriarch of Alexandria, he writes:

"If you call me universal pope, you deny that you yourself are what you admit me to be—universal. Away with words that inflate vanity and wound charity."

To his successor he writes:

"It is your duty, firmly and without prejudice to preserve the churches as you have received them, and let this attempt at diabolical usurpation find nothing of its own in you. Presume not either to give or receive letters with this false title 'universal.'"

In the course of other writings he says:

"The title 'universal' was offered during the Council of Chalcedon to the President, a part which, by God's providence, I filled. But no one of my predecessors ever consented to use so profane a title, neither did I, because plainly, if a single bishop is called 'universal' the name is taken from the rest."

"This title, 'universal bishop' is profane, superstitious, haughty, and invented by the first apostate."

"I confidently affirm that whoso calleth himself or desires to be called 'universal priest' in his pride goeth before Anti-Christ." [1]

In those words you read the spirit of a truly apostolic man, of a bishop invested with great power, political as well as spiritual, who, nevertheless, was absolutely loyal to the Apostolic nature of the Church; who assigned the position he was called to fill to Providence not to a "Divine Right"

[1] Gregorii Magni Pontificis Romani, *Epistolae*, v. p. 43, *ed.* Paris, 1705, tom. ii. pp. 771, 773. See also Denny, *Papalism*, §§ 569, 576.

issuing from Jesus Christ, and who foresaw with remarkable clearness the fact that a Petrine supremacy could not be purchased at any other price than the loss of the Episcopate.

With Gregory the Great and the divided fortunes of the old Empire it is convenient to bring this letter to a close. I hope to write again in a few days, resuming our inquiry at this point and carrying it as far as Hildebrand in the eleventh century. Meanwhile I will ask you to note very carefully the following points in the ground we have been over :

1. The equality of the Sees in the early Church, so far as jurisdiction is concerned ;
2. The purely adventitious elements that gave these Sees varying degrees of eminence ; their geographical position, political importance and association with venerable men ;
3. The way in which the imperial spirit of Rome came to exploit this natural eminence in her own case to something of an aggressive and despotic character ;
4. The legendary authority that lent colour to these pretensions ;
5. The rejection of these pretensions by the rest of the Church ;
6. And lastly, that the greatest and strongest of the Popes of this period repudiated the idea of supremacy over the rest of the Church of Christ, and pleaded for the recognition of that apostolic equality on which the Church was based at the first.

V

The History of the Claim (II)

I AM very glad you have been able to get so far with Mr. Denny's great work on *Papalism.* No, so far as I am aware, no reply has been made to that book. You are struck with the fact, with which you supplement my last letter, that not one of the Œcumenical Councils was convened by a bishop of Rome. That is one of the many facts which show how entirely ignorant the early Church was of the Claim which Rome has since put forward. By the way, when you speak of the early bishops of Rome as "popes" I hope you understand that in its early use "pope" simply meant "father" and that before it was used of bishops it was used of all priests, as it is in the Eastern Church to-day. We do not find the word applied to bishops till the fifth century, and then only in the great African Sees. When, in 1073, Hildebrand issued an edict that all the world should have "but one pope" (thereby going counter to all Gregory had enjoined) it is rather odd that he should be appropriating a title that belonged by right to the Churches of Carthage

and Alexandria ! All this, of course, would be pure pedantry were it not that the word " pope," applied to the early successors of St. Peter and St. Paul, seems to convey all that is at present claimed by Romans under the title " The Pope," and is therefore wholly misleading. It is like speaking of Ethelbert or Alfred as " King " in the same sense that George V is the present King of England. Further, the very edict of Hildebrand shows that the title ' pope ' in its present meaning, cannot be applied to any of the bishops of Rome before his date, i.e., for the first thousand years of the Church's history.

However, I am anticipating. We will now continue our inquiry into the way in which the present Claim of Rome has grown up. I need not recapitulate what I said in my last letter. Perhaps you will look again at the conclusion of it so as to pick up the thread where we left off. With Gregory the Great we see the end of the old, and the beginning of a new, Europe (a period of history which has proved to the modern mind at once the most fascinating and the most tantalizing, of a genius at once unmistakable and elusive, more kaleidoscopic and yet more homogeneous in type than perhaps any other period of history), Mediaeval Europe.

VI. Mohammed had meanwhile arisen, and it is to its opposition to the Saracen that Mediaeval Europe largely owes its homogeneity. The struggle certainly lent Rome increasing significance in the West. In 716, with the rise of Charles Martel and the Empire of the Franks, Rome's temporal

sway grew by leaps and bounds. Martel was the grandfather of Charlemagne, and with and after the latter, popes and emperors made common cause. The greater the emperor, the greater the pope who had crowned him; the higher the authority of the pope, the more consummate the power of the emperor.

VII. We shall bear in mind also that the work of reducing Western Europe to order naturally called for strong religious sanctions and interventions. The new rulers appealed to ancient precedent. The eighth and ninth centuries found men turning more and more to antiquity. Hence the former produced the famous "Forged Decretals"—a collection of documents purporting to have been written by the early bishops of Rome. In the *genuine* collection of Decretals existing at Rome before this forgery was introduced, there was no Decree of a date earlier than 385. The writer who styled himself Isidore (hence, Decretals of Pseudo-Isidore) claimed to have discovered nearly one hundred letters from Clement and Anacletus (contemporaries of the Apostles) as well as the acts of some mysterious Councils which up to then had never been heard of. All these letters and acts bolstered up the old Clementine Romance of "Peter's Chair," and brought into prominence the "Petrine" interpretation of St. Matthew xvi. 18, 19. The effect of this "discovery" on a credulous people can be imagined! Rome, the only See in the West with apostolic associations, and moreover the ancient imperial metropolis of the world, came to have, for those who sought to build

upon antiquity, an authority which is probably without parallel in history.[1]

Nor has the fraud on which this authority was grounded any parallel in history of its kind. Nothing clumsier has ever been perpetrated. Persons who lived centuries apart are represented as corresponding with each other, and learned men who lived a century before St. Jerome are made to quote Jerome's Version of the Holy Scriptures! For all that, however, no attempt has ever been made by Rome to withdraw these forgeries from the fabric of Canon Law into which Gratian wove them in the twelfth century. She admits them to be forgeries, yet she still allows them to mislead the ignorant. They render valueless any citations Rome may make from the past either in her Bulls or encyclopædias without a scholarly scrutiny which few people have the learning or leisure to exercise.

VIII. With Nicholas I (856) we come to the first preludes of the rupture between East and West, mistakenly called "the Eastern Schism." The story is far too long and involved for recital here, nor would it add materially to the long chain of protests from the Church at large in the teeth of which Rome wrested her sovereignty. Suffice it to say that in her attempt to dominate the East and to justify her excommunications, she had recourse to another forgery, this time a collection of spurious passages from the *Greek* Fathers and Councils by which it is

[1] For further history of these "Decretals," see below, Letter vii., p. 68 f.

made to appear that the Claim of Rome to universal obedience had been acknowledged in the East from the earliest times! This "Treasury of the Greek Fathers" has never attained the celebrity of its Isidorian rival in fraud, yet the forged documents crept into the schools, notwithstanding the famous remonstrance of St. Thomas Aquinas, and became part and parcel of that Mediaeval theology which is Rome's inheritance to-day.

IX. During the years 955 to 1059 Rome sank lower in morals than probably any great power the world has known. I need not linger over the period known as "The Pornocracy." That dreadful word is chiefly important as affording a background to the reforms of Gregory VII, better known as Hildebrand. Hildebrand saw that, secure though Rome then was of the temporal power, she could not remain so if the head and centre were corrupt, and with infinite perseverance he achieved the reforms he set out to accomplish. But, alas, the severity of the task blunted the instrument! The politician absorbed the seer. Rome was purged of her fornication only that she might be unfettered in her world-government.

"I have loved righteousness and hated iniquity, therefore I die in exile," are said to have been Hildebrand's last words. "My Lord," replied a bishop, "in exile thou canst not die, for as Vicar of Christ thou hast received the heathen for thine inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." The words were to have almost literal fulfilment a little later under Innocent III.

The Mediaeval Papacy was at its height, yet reaction was already appearing. It was Hildebrand to whom William I of England refused to do homage. It was Innocent who vainly espoused the cause of John against the Barons.

X. It is under Hildebrand that we first meet with the idea of "Infallibility" as an attribute of the bishops of Rome. A thousand years had elapsed before this attribute, said to be that of every successor of Peter, was recognized by its possessors! Almost another thousand were to elapse before it came to be defined as an article of faith. In the eighteenth century the learned Benedict XIV said: "If it be true that in the treasure-house of my breast are hidden all law and all wisdom, I confess that I have never been able to find the key!"

But with Hildebrand my task in this and the previous letter is done. The long course of usurpation, obscure and unpremeditated in its beginnings, has reached its goal in an imperialism only differing from that of the Cæsars in that its vehicle was ecclesiastical instead of secular. Each stage in its advance is marked by two things; political expediency, backed up by legendary authority. With the political expediency of the earlier Papacy it is impossible for us to quarrel. The work of St. Gregory and some of his successors was almost wholly beneficent. But all attempt to honour the later development of the Papacy, from the period of the False Decretals onwards, breaks down under the strain of those gigantic untruths.

And the worst of it is that the same spirit permeates Rome to-day. Not only has she never repudiated those forgeries, but she still uses the same methods. You should get No. xiv. of the *Church Historical Society's Handbooks* (S.P.C.K.) in which the statements of the *Satis Cognitum* are examined, and the actual quotations compared with those given in it. Surely it is scarcely necessary to insult our intelligence with methods borrowed from a heretical romance and the inventions of Isidore! At any rate such methods amply justify one of the most impartial minds of our age in saying,

"Nothing gives to the minds of truth-loving men so invincible a prejudice against the Ultramontane system and temper, nothing so radically convinces them that it is not Divine, as the certainty that Ultramontane writers will always be found manipulating facts, will never behave as men who are loyally endeavouring to present facts as they are." [1]

You are bearing in mind, are you not, what has prompted me to write these two last letters? You asked me how the Papal Claim came to be promulgated by the Roman Church. In these letters I have tried to show what I believe to be the truth, that the Claim is accounted for by its history. At the same time I must repeat that what I have been sketching is not the development of a principle latent in the Church at the first, but the history of an addition borrowed from without. That any piece of mediaeval polity, however well it may have worked at one time, should be incorporated into the *conditions* of Church Membership, so that "all

[1] Gore, *Roman Catholic Claims.*

those who do not acknowledge the Roman Pontiff as their Head, do not belong to the Church of Jesus Christ," is a monstrous and intolerable imposture ; and upon it and those who promulgate it must rest the responsibility for the great division in the Church of Christ.

For I must ask you to return to what is of far more importance than any mere protest against Rome, namely the fact that the Papacy has destroyed the episcopate as a serious force.[1] It has achieved exactly what was foretold by Gregory the Great: by making one bishop "universal," it has deprived others of apostolicity. No Roman Catholic can say with any intelligent meaning that he believes in an "apostolic Church"; what he believes in is a *Petrine* Church ; and in so believing he has changed the original constitution of the Church as she came from the hands of her Divine Founder. To do this is to make ourselves out to be wiser than GOD.

[1] See on this, Figgis, *Churches in the Modern State*, pp. 149 ff.

VI

Are our Bishops in the Apostolic Succession ?

BEFORE we consider any of the points arising out of your last letter, may we briefly review the results of our correspondence as far as it has gone ?

We began, you remember, from your own admission that the difficulties you find in the English Church were leading you to look to Rome for peace and settlement. This turned our attention to the Roman Claim. We agreed that if that Claim were found to hold good, then our duty was clear. There was nothing for it but submission. If on the other hand we found that Claim did not hold good, we could turn our attention to the things that distress you in the English Church. Well, we have examined that Claim, and we find that it breaks down at every point. We find that the endeavour to ground it on Scripture fails, owing to the fact that the only Scripture advanced in its favour is one on the meaning of which the Fathers are disagreed, the great majority of them being in favour of an interpretation which, while it supports the apostolic

nature of the Church, goes counter to all idea of a supreme authority promised by our Lord to St. Peter and his successors. Further, on examining the history of the Claim, we find it to be the outgrowth of legend and political expediency. We have therefore reached the *negative* conclusion that the Roman Claim does *not* hold good—in other words, that the acknowledgment of the Pope as the Vicar of Christ and Visible Head of the Church on earth cannot possibly be a *sine quâ non* of membership with the Church of Christ. But the acknowledgment of this is the only ground on which we can be received into communion with the Roman Catholic Church. Therefore we cannot be received into communion with that Church, as at present constituted. We may be, and I trust are, in sympathy with it in all those things in which it conserves and seeks to extend a common Catholic heritage; but we cannot commit ourselves to a groundless Claim in so serious a matter as membership within the Church of Christ. This disposes of our duty as to submission to Rome, and closes the first, and, as it appeared to me in your case, most urgent part of our inquiry.

But in the course of arriving at this conclusion, we have also reached one which is of far greater importance, namely, the apostolic nature of the Church. This means, briefly, that any group of people who are in communion with their bishop (granted their bishop is in true succession to the Apostles) is a part of the One, Holy, Catholic Apostolic Church. This is what St. Ignatius meant

when he wrote (as early as A.D. 100), "Wherever the bishop appeareth, there let the people be; and so where Christ is, there is the Catholic Church." This is the true principle of membership with the Church of Christ; in addition, of course, to Baptism and belief in the doctrine of Christ, and participation in the Sacraments.

Now may I quote some words from your last letter which seem to me to put with great clearness this positive principle which we have arrived at. You say: "I seem to see now that there is something in our appeal to the early Church which is much more than an appeal to antiquity. If, in turning to the past, we find the true force of the *apostolic* Church (as opposed to the Petrine), then the Episcopate becomes a living reality, and so, to hazard a paradox, in going to the past we are appealing to the present."

I venture to think that the "paradox" is a most important truth, and that with it you have foiled the jibe which our Roman Catholic friends are so fond of making when they find us referring to the Scriptures and the Fathers. In going to the past, we find the present. In becoming convinced of the apostolic framework of the Church, we discover the value and use of the Episcopate to-day. The Episcopate is the true Divine centre of authority in the Church. It is an official identity with the Apostles. So that just as the Church is One Body of Christ throughout all ages, so are the bishops One with the Apostles as being the framework on which that Body is built. This is why Tertullian used

to put two questions to those who claimed to be of the Church, not only: "Do you hold the Apostolic Truth?" but "Have you the Apostolic succession?" This is why Cyprian bases the unity of the Church on the unity of the Episcopate. This is why Hooker says that "to separate from the Bishops is to separate from the Church of which the bishops are the rulers." This is the point to which I hoped our previous correspondence would bring you, and I am very glad to see that you have seized it and made it clear.

Then you go on to press the difficulty created by our own English episcopate being so divided. Before, however, we turn our attention to this (which certainly is a difficulty, though I think an exaggerated one) is not the next step before us that of becoming perfectly clear that our own bishops to-day are in the Apostolic succession? It by no means follows, as some seem to think, that to have proved Rome wrong is to prove ourselves right. There is one standard in this matter, it is the apostolic episcopate. We have tried Rome by this standard; it remains to try ourselves. If we find that we have over us to-day "apostolic men," we can then profitably consider any irregularities which may obtain by their consent.

The regular succession of our English bishops down to the Reformation has never been held in question. It has, however, been alleged, that during the Reformation a break occurred in the apostolic descent. The author of this allegation is, of course, Rome. I confess I find it a little

amusing; the pains Rome takes to slay the slain! If her Claim is valid, then we are in schism, no matter how replete our episcopate may be with apostolic grace; why then should she go to such trouble to invalidate our episcopate? Surely it is enough to excommunicate us without eviscerating us! Perhaps, after all, some misgiving as to the strength of her Claim prompts her to this *coup de grâce*. Be that as it may, Rome has tried to invalidate our post-Reformation episcopate, first, by circulating a legend about the consecration of Archbishop Parker; and latterly by alleging that our Ordinal is defective in form and intention. Let us consider these two attacks in order.

The history of the continuance of the Episcopate in the English Church during and after the Reformation is briefly as follows: Cardinal Pole, who was consecrated Archbishop of Canterbury in 1556, died a few hours after Mary's death. It was Elizabeth's first care to have the vacant Archbishopric properly filled. Matthew Parker was the priest selected, a man who appeared likely to maintain the ancient liberties of the English Church against Roman interference, and Catholic doctrine against the incursions of foreign protestantism.

The consecration of Archbishop Parker was thus the connecting link by which the Apostolic succession in the English Church was continued after the final breach with the Bishop of Rome; although we must at the same time remember that if there were any doubt as to Parker's consecration, the Apostolic succession would have been recovered in

the next century in the consecration of Archbishop Laud, in whom three lines of succession met: Italian, Irish, and English.[1]

Now, forty-five years after Parker's consecration, a legend was circulated that he and some other bishops underwent a mock ceremony at the *Nag's Head* tavern, and for twenty years this story was repeated by every Roman writer on the subject "with suicidal eagerness." The actual facts were these: Parker was consecrated Archbishop of Canterbury in the chapel of Lambeth Palace on December 17, 1559, by Barlow, sometime Bishop of Bath and Wells, then Elect of Chichester; Scory, sometime Bishop of Chichester, then Elect of Hereford; Hodgkins, Suffragan Bishop of Bedford; Coverdale, sometime Bishop of Exeter. The Lambeth register gives a long and minute account of the event. Barlow and Hodgkins had been consecrated according to the old Pontifical. This is admitted by the Roman Catholic historian, Lingard.[2]

The *Nag's Head* legend has long been cast aside. Father Brandi, S.J., in *A Last Word*, says: "One cannot be held responsible for what may be written on this or any other subject by incompetent writers, but for a long time past no English (Roman) Catholic writer of any standing has used the *Nag's Head*

[1] See Vernon Staley, *Catholic Religion*, p. 104 n; *Priest's Prayer Book*, "Anglican Orders"; Haddan, *Apostolic Succession in the Church of England*, p. 180 ff; Grafton, *Christian and Catholic*, pp. 199 ff; Denny, *Anglican Orders* (S.P.C.K.), pp. 49–73.

[2] *Hist.*, vi. p. 329.

story as an argument." [1] "With regard to Parker's consecration," says the Roman Catholic Canon Eastcourt, "as an historical fact it is most certain that it took place on December 17, 1559, according to the description in the register." [2] Dr. Döllinger affirmed in 1875, "The fact that Parker was consecrated by four rightly consecrated bishops *rite et legitime*, with the imposition of hands and the necessary words, is so well attested that if one chooses to doubt this fact, one could with the same right doubt ten thousand facts."

This, I think, disposes of the attempt to invalidate the English Episcopate by means of legend. Rome now admits the *historicity* of our succession, but denies its validity on the ground that the proper "form" and "intention" of consecration have been defective. In 1896 Leo XIII issued a Bull condemning the Orders of the English Church on this ground. Let us briefly examine this.

Roughly speaking, the "*form*" refers to the outward sign in the sacrament of Holy Order, the laying on of hands and the accompanying words. It was also held, under Pope Eugenius IV, to include the conveyance to the priest of certain instruments, the chalice and the paten. This opinion has long been abandoned officially, yet it is not uncommon to see it still brought forward as evidence against the English rite in which no such conveyance takes place. The "*intention*" refers to the purpose for which Holy Order is conferred.

[1] *A Last Word*, p. 5.
[2] *Anglican Orders*, p. 371.

Now Leo XIII asserted that "the *form* of the English Ordinal in use from 1550 to 1662 was defective, because no explicit mention was made, at the moment of the laying on of hands, of the particular grade of the ministry which was being conferred. This objection is met by the fact that the Ordination Services in question ("The form of ordering of priests"; "The form of consecrating an archbishop or bishop") are quite distinct, as their titles and contents show. In each service the grade of the ministry which is being conferred is indicated again and again.[1]

Leo XIII also asserted that there is no "intention" in the English Ordinal to ordain priests and consecrate bishops *in the Catholic sense*. This objection he based on the omission from our Ordinal of the words "Receive authority to offer sacrifices to God, and to celebrate masses as well for the quick as the dead," and the insertion in their place of the words: "Take thou authority to preach the Word of God, and to minister the Holy Sacraments." Now, it is true this change was made and has been retained. I cannot now go into the reasons for it. They do not affect the issue here. Like many other things about the Reformation, I shall hope to consider them

[1] At the last revision of the Ordinal, in 1662, the words "for the office and work of a priest"; "for the office and work of a bishop," were added, to be used during the laying on of hands. This addition was made, not because the previous form was felt to be inadequate, but to meet objections of Presbyterians who held that the offices of bishop and presbyter were identical.

when I come to answer your questions about the Reformation. The question here is, Do these substituted words alter the "intention" of the rite? do they prevent ordination or consecration "in the Catholic sense"? If the words for which they were substituted are essential to Catholic orders, it is, to say the least, singular that they never appeared in the Roman Ordinal before the eleventh century! But our present words are equally "Catholic" in intention, for they confer power to "minister the Sacraments." Now, it is obvious that if one of the Sacraments referred to has, as we believe it has, a sacrificial aspect, then most certainly the English wording includes the "intention" of the Roman. If one of the "sacraments" I "minister" is the Holy Eucharist, then I certainly have authority to offer Sacrifice to God, since the Holy Eucharist *is* The Christian Sacrifice. And Cranmer, who was mainly responsible for the English Ordinal, knew that he was thus preserving the old "intention," for he wrote in 1551 that he "never intended to deny that the Holy Eucharist is a Sacrifice."[1] In fact the word "Sacrament" covers and "intends" the word "Sacrifice," so that when we use the former we include the latter. As a matter of fact the Roman rule for the consecration of bishops affords a striking parallel with this; for the consecrating bishops, when they lay their hands on the bishops-elect, simply say: "Receive the Holy Ghost," and no more, leaving the matter far more vague and

[1] See *On the Lord's Supper*, p. 369, ed. Parker Soc.

indeterminate than does our corresponding form in the ordination of priests!

If you read carefully the Preface to the Ordinal in your Prayer Book you will see that it was the deliberate intention of the English Church, while reforming her abuses, to continue the three Orders of the Ministry as they had existed from the Apostles' time, and therefore that of the Episcopate. Therefore, so far as "intention" is concerned, the English Episcopate is valid; and we have seen that it is valid from the point of view of "form." And we have further seen that with this "form" and "intention" it was uninterruptedly handed down. So that the validity of the English Episcopate is maintained every way, and Dr. Döllinger said no more than the truth when he said at Bonn in 1874:

"The solution of the question depends solely on an examination of historical evidence, and I must give it as the result of my investigations, that I have no manner of doubt as to the validity of the Episcopal Succession in the English Church." [1]

"It is very greatly to be regretted," says Bishop Grafton, "that Leo XIII was misinformed when in 1896 he pronounced his judgment. A great many devout Roman Catholics, both of the priests and the laity, believe in their hearts the validity of English Orders. They have come into friendly relations with English priests. They see the effects in us of a sacramental grace. Their spiritual discernment tells them that the English Church possesses a valid Episcopate as surely as themselves. The ruling of Leo XIII restrains the expression of their belief, but they know it to be true." [2]

[1] *Report of the Proceedings of the Reunion Conference at Bonn in* 1874, pp. 50, 51.

[2] *Christian and Catholic*, p. 193. Longmans & Co., 1912.

Nor was Leo wholly responsible for that lost opportunity. If you wish to know what influences were brought to bear upon him you should read Lord Halifax's *Leo XIII and Anglican Orders*. It should have the effect of opening your eyes to the existence of the old spirit of the Clementine Romance and the False Decretals within the Curia to-day.

So we find that we have over us to-day in the English Church "apostolic men." I feel sure that you will be alive to the importance of this? It means that here in the English Church you *have* an apostolic Ministry, that, consequently, you have the sacraments and the whole life of Grace validly mediated; and I ask: what more do you need? I grant, you may *want* more, that you may quite justifiably *want* more; but what more do you *need* for your salvation? And the ultimate question at the back of all our inquiry is the salvation of the soul, is it not? Well, here, flowing down from the Apostles, is baptismal grace; the Holy Ghost has been given you by the laying on of apostolic hands; the words of valid absolution have conveyed to you pardon for post-baptismal sin; in the most blessed Sacrament of the Altar you have received our Lord's Body and Blood, His Soul, and His Divinity; by-and-by, in the ordinary course of our nature you will receive the last sacraments and pass hence with the Commendation of the Faithful. I ask: what more do you *need*?

That there are irregularities and differences of opinion amongst us I freely admit. It would be strange if there were not, since in no part of the

Church, and at no time in its history, has it been without irregularities and differences. And certainly Rome is not free from the one or the other. With some of these I hope to deal in my next letter. But the question I want you now to fix upon, and with which I conclude this present letter, is this : if you have a true episcopate, the fount of the ministry, the bond of unity, the guardian of the truth, the instrument and pledge of grace, what more can you possibly need ?

Do you reply : we may have all this, and yet be in schism ? I answer we can only be in schism if the Roman Claim holds good ; but we have already seen that it breaks down completely. Therefore we are not in schism. The responsibility for Rome's separation from us and from the millions of the Eastern Church lies wholly with Rome. If your elder brother were to try to introduce conditions into your father's will which your father had never made, you know very well that such conditions would never be recognized in law, and you would still be inheritor of the portion your father had bequeathed you. If your elder brother were thereupon to call you an impostor, that would not make you such, and if he were to deny you and the rest of the family his house, the fault would be his and the consequences would be his doing. There is no question of " schism " when we are ready for union, not on our own terms, but on the terms laid down by our Lord and His apostles.

No, my dear friend, the " schism " will be committed if, with such clear proofs of an apostolic

Church as you have in the English communion, you allow yourself to be drawn aside into a community which has tampered with the Divine constitution of the Church.

We are mainly concerned, in this correspondence, with the English Church, but we cannot really narrow down the issue to that between the Roman obedience and the English Church only. We cannot forget the millions of the Eastern Orthodox Church who are out of communion with Rome, and out of it precisely because they have regarded Rome's claim to supreme jurisdiction as spurious from its very rise. In one of your letters you seemed troubled at the thought of "being outside the majority of Catholics." Surely you forget that over against the 216 millions of Roman Catholics you must set 250 millions of Catholics *not-Roman*. The minority is Rome. Not only so, but it follows that if the 216 millions of Roman Catholics are Roman because they assent to a Petrine Church, the 250 millions are not Roman because they believe in an apostolic Church. They may not all be in union. That does not affect my point. If they are apostolic churches each looking to its Bishop as a successor of the apostles, they are in *unity*, nor can any mere separation prevail against that unity. There are many local churches since the Church was founded, that have never entered into corporate communion one with another, yet they have shared the unity of the Church, because they have been apostolic. Rome, then, is not only in a minority but is in a negative position, having denied the apostolicity of the

Catholic Church with her Petrine Claim. The Eastern Orthodox regard the Pope as "the first protestant," and there is a good deal to be said for the epithet. If the Church has been founded by our Lord upon all the apostles, then the position held by the Eastern Orthodox and English churches is the positive and Catholic one, and Rome is in the negative. You will say, this is taking high ground for those who differ from Rome. It is. It is the only ground that can be taken.

VII

Before the Reformation

WITH regard to the relation of the English Church to the Papacy before the Reformation, I think you make two mistakes: first, you seem to be under the impression that "the Church of the English" was uniformly under submission to Rome from its commencement; and secondly, I am not sure you sufficiently realize the wave of relief that passed over Northern Europe on finding in the fifteenth century that the "Decretals" on which Rome based her Claim were forgeries, and that the Claim was consequently a fiction. In this letter I shall try to deal as briefly as I can with these two matters, and in so doing I shall be able to answer your question about the *pallium*, by means of which, Fr. X. has told you, the English Archbishops held their jurisdiction from the Pope.

Let us begin at the very beginning, with the early British Church. That Church was of great importance. Its faith was genuine; its activity enormous. It produced great saints and missionaries like Ninian and David and Patrick, and through them, though later, Columba, Cuthbert and Aidan. Its

link with the rest of the Catholic Church was not Rome, but Gaul ; and, through Gaul, Ephesus, the Church of the blessed St. John.

When, in 429, heresy sprang up in this Church, owing to the erroneous teaching of Pelagius, her bishops appealed for help, not to Rome, but to Gaul. And it was Germanus of Auxerre, and Lupus of Troyes, who, with no other sanction than that of the Church in Gaul, responded and dispelled the false teaching. Even after the Celt had fled before the invading Teuton into the mountains, this Church maintained its faith, and Gregory the Great shows himself fully alive to its importance in his letters to the missionary bishop Augustine.

Although the mission of Augustine to this country in 597 owed its inception to the large-hearted Gregory, its immediate base of operation was again Gaul, to which Church Augustine was commended for aid *and authority* in pursuit of his task. And while we owe to him and to Gaul measureless gratitude for the conversion of Kent, and for the strong institutional position of Christianity in the South-east of England, we cannot forget the labours of Aidan and Cuthbert in the North, nor in Wessex those of Birinus, who was consecrated by the Archbishop of Milan. Nothing can be more misleading or do more violence to the facts of history than the oft-repeated saying that our Saxon forefathers owed their conversion to Rome. The history of that conversion is far too complex to be forced into any such convenient channel.

But even if the indebtedness of the English Church

to Rome were greater and more direct than it is, it would still be true that Rome did not impose, nor did the English Church concede, anything approaching the Papal Claim. The ancient British Church did not accept the advice tendered to Augustine by Gregory, and yet it was not thereby thrown into schism. Those who at the Council of Whitby refused to adopt the Roman observance of Easter were not thereby excluded from the Catholic Church. There was at that date a separate mission going on in each part of the country, yet the fruit of all these was already known as "the Church of the English" (the expression is Gregory's). If then these separate missions thus had a unity, what was it that gave them that unity? Certainly not Rome, for they were not all in allegiance to Rome. They were all one as possessing "one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism," and in those days what was sufficient for the inspired apostle was sufficient for Gregory and the rest of the Catholic Church.

In one of his Letters to Gregory, Augustine raises a question which is curiously modern in its anticipation of that craving for uniformity which is one of the elements in our unrest to-day. He says:

"Whereas the Faith is one and the same, why are there differences in different churches, and why is one custom of holy masses observed in Rome and a different one in Gaul?" just the type of question we find again and again in the "agony columns" of the *Church Times* and the *Treasury*! How does St. Gregory answer it? "You know, my brother, the custom of the Church at Rome in which you had your rearing. But it pleases me that if you have found anything in the Church of Gaul or in any other church which may

be more acceptable to Almighty God, you carefully make choice of the same, and assiduously teach the Church of the English whatever you have been able to gather from the several churches. For things are not to be loved for the sake of places, but places for the sake of good things. Choose, therefore, from every Church those things which are pious, religious, and upright, and when you have, as it were, made them up into a bundle, instil them into the minds of the English." [1]

What could be clearer? The newly formed Church was to have its own customs and ceremonial. To Rome it might look for advice and assistance, as it is natural for a missionary church to look to one already established. But it was to be a national and autonomous Church. Like those which Justin Martyr described earlier, it, with its bishop, was to form a unity of its own.

Accordingly, we are not surprised when Bede tells us, writing about events fifty years later, that Wighard was chosen Archbishop "with the consent of the Holy Church of the English nation," [2] nor, further, when he describes the whole English Church as consenting to obey Theodore of Tarsus, not as the emissary of Vitalian, but as their *own* archbishop.[3] This autonomy is further seen from the fact that at the Council of Cloveshoe in 747, when the question of appeals was brought forward, it was decided that "if there are different things too hard for the bishop of a diocese to decide, let him bring them before the archbishop in provincial synod, and let the archbishop settle them." There is no hint of any further

[1] Bede, i. 27. [2] Ibid. iii. 29. [3] Ibid. iv. 2.

appeal. "Here surely is a clear instance of the position of the Anglo-Saxon Church as a Body capable of settling even the most complicated matters without any outside interference." [1]

Only twice did Legates from Rome visit this country before the Conquest. The second of these visits in the days of Edward the Confessor is entirely negligible; the former lives in history as deplorable. At the Council of Chelsea in 787 it was on the advice of the Legate that Lichfield was raised to an archbishopric. This proved to be in every way an unfortunate step, and it was reversed in Council sixteen years later. No Legate was present on the latter occasion, and the fact that Rome acquiesced in the reversion of its own policy is proof that at that time the English Church had a right of final decision in the conduct of its own affairs.

After the Conquest the relations between the English Church and Rome were closer. The English clergy had been driven into revolt by an impolitic act on the part of Edward the Confessor; consequently it was necessary to get Norman clergy to take their places, and the Norman clergy were in much closer touch with Rome. Yet neither then nor afterwards did the English Church become so subject to Rome as to lose its separate national existence. William himself maintained the civil and ecclesiastical independence of England. We are now in the times of Hildebrand, and you will remember what I said in a previous letter about his ambitions; yet William flatly refused to do him

[1] Cecil and Clayton, *Our National Church*, p. 36.

homage. "I refuse to do homage, nor will I, because neither have I promised it, nor do I find that it was ever rendered by my predecessors to your predecessors."[1] No Papal Legate was allowed to visit this country, nor could Papal letters be received by any bishop without the King's permission. Those who suppose that "royal supremacy" was the invention of Henry VIII would do well to read the history of the Conquest. As Dean Church says: "Few points of ecclesiastical supremacy were claimed by Henry VIII which were not also claimed and possessed by Norman William."[2] It is a striking proof of the autonomy of the English Church of those days that when the Pope ordered Lanfranc to come to Rome on a certain day on pain of deposition, Lanfranc did not go, nor was he deposed.[3]

Nor was this attitude towards Rome the isolated policy of a despotic monarch. In 1164 Henry II produced the famous Constitutions of Clarendon, which embodied for the most part the legislation of the previous years. The eighth canon ordered that no ecclesiastical appeal should go beyond the archbishop's court without the King's consent. "If the Archbishop fail to give justice, last of all recourse must be had to the lord King, that by his precept the controversy may be ended in the court of the archbishop."[4] Again, when "the personal des-

[1] Gee and Hardy, *Documents Illustrative of English Church History*, p. 57.

[2] *St. Anselm*, p. 148.

[3] Cecil and Clayton, op. cit., p. 46.

[4] Acland and Ransome, *English Political History*, p. 24.

potism of the kings "[1] became too much for the nation, and, in 1213, Langton returned from his exile at the invitation of the Barons, he came not as a legislator from Rome, but as "the champion of the old English customs and law."[2] Two years later John signed the Great Charter, among the provisions of which was this: "Let the Church of England be free, and her liberties uninjured."

The attitude of Innocent the Great towards Magna Charta indicates the flood-tide of temporal ambition which had by this time seized and inspired the successors of Hildebrand. Innocent "cancelled" the Great Charter, not so much because of its assertion of the independence of the English Church, as because it maintained the independence of the nation! Papal ambition had already passed into another phase. It was no longer merely supremacy over the Church that animated the popes, but ascendency over the whole world. The ambitions of the Cæsars had emerged from the mask of ecclesiasticism. We have already seen how vain was Innocent's opposition to the Charter. The resistance of the English was typical of the widespread doubt which had begun to infect Western Europe as to the basis of these overweening claims.

I think this is a good place at which to pause and consider what you have been told by your Roman Catholic friend as to the Papal "pall" or *pallium*, as a symbol that our archbishops held their jurisdiction direct from the Pope. The *pallium* or

[1] The phrase is J. R. Green's. *History*, i. 238.
[2] J. R. Green, op. cit.

woollen scarf was originally an imperial emblem of office which found its way into the Church after the conversion of Constantine, and was especially valued by the Bishops of Rome after the partition of the Empire. It was given by them as *a mark of honour* to great metropolitans. By the year 774, it came to be understood that the metropolitans should ask for the *Pallium* from Rome "that they might be numbered amongst the sheep committed to Peter." [1] Even then the rule was not entirely successful, though, of course, by that time the Claim had come to be fairly advanced. It was under Pope Nicholas I, in 866, that the pall became a distinct emblem of jurisdiction, so that without the gift of a pall a metropolitan was powerless.

It is, therefore, perfectly evident that the bestowal of the pall depended for its efficacy on the Petrine legend. Only after that legend had come into prominence on the authority of the forged Decretals did the popes dare to turn the *pallium honoris* into an indispensable badge of jurisdiction. The gift thus assumed a very different character to what a similar gift possessed in the days of St. Gregory. In those days there was no idea of its being a badge of jurisdiction, still less of its being indispensable. And it is notable that neither Laurentius nor Mellitus, Augustine's immediate successors, received the pall at all. Had it been a badge of jurisdiction, they could not have acted without it; as it was merely a tribute of honour, there was no necessity of the grant being repeated. You will find the whole

[1] St. Bonifacius, *Ep. ad Cuthbertum*, xxv.

history of the emblem carefully worked out in a long note at the end of Denny's *Papalism* (pp. 693–5); but the admission of the Benedictine editors of St. Gregory's works is enough for our purpose; they say: "the theory of the necessity of the *pallium* had not up to that time been introduced." [1]

The argument from the *pallium* is all one with the Petrine Claim, and it is simply ridiculous of your Roman friends to bring it forward as a separate piece of evidence.[2]

The False Decretals made their appearance sometime between 829 and 857. Their appearance was vital to the whole Claim of Rome over the rest of Christendom. They sanctioned an extension of the power of the Pope beyond anything previously known, and the actions that were based upon them became in turn precedents for further aggression. One of the things they cleverly condemned was the finality of the archbishops' courts as courts of appeal; thus referring every grievance for its final settlement to the Pope.

The result of all this was that the nations of Europe groaned under a tyranny worse, if possible, than that which Prussia would inflict upon Europe to-day. The intrigues of Rome kept the nations at war; the greed of Rome impoverished the people. Here and there, men of stern stuff, like Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln, protested against the exactions

[1] S. Greg. M. *Ep. ad Vigilium Epis. Arelartenseum*, Ep. lib. v. Ep. liii.; P. L. lxxvii. 782, nota b.

[2] See two articles by the Rev. H. J. Clayton on "The Pallium" in the *English Church Review*, July, August, 1913.

and impositions, but so long as Rome's claims were backed up, as it was thought, by venerable decisions of Councils and of the Fathers there was no escape from the despotism. Good men might lament the corruptions of the Papal Court, and pray for better days ; still, they had to admit that it was the Court of Peter whom our Lord had made supreme lord over His whole Church.

Then at length in the fifteenth century, Nicholas of Cusa doubted the genuineness of these documents on which so much rested. The Magdebourg Centuriators followed him. On a careful scrutiny of the documents the internal evidence showed up the imposture of the whole. Roman authority was suddenly stripped of everything except a single text in the New Testament of doubtful interpretation ! You may imagine the wave of feeling that swept through the nations, especially those whose national expansion had been warped and crippled by the jealousies of the Vatican. Men woke up everywhere to the fact that the basis of this tyranny simply did not exist ! It is little wonder that Germany should have revolted against apostolic authority altogether. Happily England, always deeply Catholic at heart, went to no such lengths as revolution. Satisfied that the enormities of the Papacy had no support in any doctrine of the Church, and that the Pope had no sort of jurisdiction over England, she simply asserted her own rights as a national Church and set about her own reforms. And in so doing she remained what she had been before: the Catholic Church in this country.

Your Roman Catholic friends will of course tell you that this mediaeval tyranny is not likely to occur again, and why cannot we be content to let bygones be bygones? Well, the past we know; the future we do not know. But what about Rome's present attitude? How is it that, while she acknowledges (as she perforce must) these Decretals to be a forgery, she has never attempted to purge them out of the body of her tradition and law? and how is it that she still clings to a claim that destroys the apostolic nature of the Church of Christ?

PS.—Let me earnestly recommend you to read on the whole of this subject the little work of Fr. Puller, *The Relation of the English Church to the Monarchical Claims of the Roman See*, Oxford Tracts, Longmans, Green & Co. 1*s*.

VIII

The English Reformation

I COME in this letter to those irregularities and differences of opinion about which you wrote so fully a short time back. We are now to consider the things that distress you in the English Church after having been convinced (1) that Rome has no claim on your submission; (2) that the English Church, by reason of its apostolic episcopate, has every claim on your adherence.

You say you are "not happy" where you are. I want you to look the causes of this "unhappiness" straight in the face, and test their right to distress you. As you tell me that each of the present irregularities and differences leads you "to an increasing distrust of the Reformation and its tendencies," we had better begin with the Reformation, or, as you call it, "the supreme irregularity," and work forwards.

To begin with, I take it you clearly distinguish between the Reformation of the Church in this country, and the revolution against the Church in Germany and Holland? That is a most important

distinction, and until it is quite clear in your mind, it is not of much use going further. The term "revolution against the Church" as characterizing continental protestantism, sounds rather violent; it is not my expression, but Harnack's, and you should read his work, *What is Christianity?* (pp. 281–283, of the Cheap Edition), for a proof of its correctness, and a grasp of the distinction we have before us. You might also with advantage read Chapters III, IV, and V of Adderley's little book, *The Catholicism of the Church of England.*[1] Unfortunately, a great deal of loose popular teaching has identified the revolution under Luther with the Reformation here, but to any one who has read the history of the period, the distinction is quite clear.

Keeping it in mind, and occupying our attention entirely with the English Reformation, there are three questions which we need to ask about that series of events. They are these:

(1) Did it involve any injury to the constitution of the Catholic Church in this country?

(2) Was it necessary?

(3) Was there any precedent to justify it?

(1) As to the first, the answer is obviously and definitely, No. In a previous letter I have pointed out that the Apostolic succession was continued without a break, bishops being consecrated all through the Reformation by bishops of the Apostolic line. In the words of Aubrey Moore: "The continuity of the English Church was the first principle of the English Reformation, and the apos-

[1] London, Francis Griffiths. 2*s.* 6*d.*

tolical succession, so carefully preserved throughout all changes, was the answer to the charge of schism, as the retention of the three creeds and the recognition of the four Councils was the answer to the charge of heresy." [1] In a word, the constitution of the Church as determined by Christ and His Apostles was maintained intact. "No one undoubted Catholic doctrine, practice or institution was abolished at our Reformation. No one novel doctrine, practice or institution was imposed." [2] Let me advise you to read the little work from which those words are taken, Dr. Mason's *What Changes were made at the English Reformation?* [2] And I ask you to note in passing that such a statement cannot possibly be made about the Roman Catholic communion as it exists to-day, with her unwarranted introduction of novel articles of faith, imposed on all as terms of communion.

Well, then, if the Reformation did not violate the constitution of the Church in England, need we trouble ourselves very much as to what was done during the Reformation, or as to its contributory causes? No English churchman to-day, with any knowledge of the subject, can pretend that there were not elements in it that are regrettable. No intelligent churchman to-day will offer up thanksgivings for Henry and his divorce, or for Elizabeth

[1] *History of the Reformation*, p. 229.

[2] *Church Historical Society Handbooks*, No. II. S.P.C.K. Cf. Dr. Pusey: "The Church of England has, from the Reformation, held implicitly all which the ancient Church ever held." *The Rule of Faith*, p. 42.

and Walsingham. The phrase "our glorious Reformation" has gone the way of "our incomparable liturgy," and other phrases that lie in the lumber-rooms of less enlightened controversy. You tell me that at various times during that period rood screens were hewn down, and statues of our Lady and the Saints were burned; that the wives of wealthy burghers made copes and chasubles into bed quilts; that holy-water stoups were sawn asunder, and many other wild and woeful things were done? Yes, my friend, and the Danes once ravaged England and the Dutch sailed up the Thames, yet England is England still! Thank God, it takes something more than axes and hammers to unmake a Church.

But what about the Royal Supremacy? Cannot Rome justly bring this against us? Not in the light of the fact that "royal supremacy" began in Rome itself under Constantine, who, in constituting himself *pontifex maximus* with full consent of Sylvester the Bishop of Rome at the time, afforded the Tudor Tyrant of the sixteenth century a very respectable precedent! not in view of the fact that in the Middle Ages it was at the command of an Emperor that the Papacy (the Papacy, mind you) adopted the *Filioque* clause in the Creed, at the cost of alienating about one-half of the whole Church! Henry in his wildest dreams never tampered with the Creed. When Rome has struck the *Filioque* out of the Creed, as I pray she never may, it will be time for her to jibe at the "royal supremacy." Queen Elizabeth is credited by most Roman writers with setting herself up as head of the Church in

England. Yet listen to what Elizabeth herself said : " The Queen is unwilling to be addressed either by word of mouth or in writing as the Head of the Church of England. For she seriously maintains that this honour is due to Christ alone, and cannot belong to any human being soever." [1] You have read, I take it, Article xxxvii. ? and remember the words : " We give not to our princes the ministering of God's Word or of the Sacraments." We have no *pontifex maximus*, and never had. By the way, you might look up what Gibson says on that Article, Vol. II of his work on *The Thirty-Nine Articles*, pp. 769, 778. I think what he says there will put " the royal supremacy " in its right perspective, and you might supplement this with Wakeman's *Introduction to the History of the Church of England*, pp. 318–320 ; and Dixon's *History of the Church of England*, Vol. I, p. 62 f. The fact is this, and it is one of pure common sense, that as the Church exists as a spiritual society *under the conditions of civic life, a Christian head of the State must hold and exercise a strong ecclesiastical position.* This is the principle, and its formal assertion in the sixteenth century grew out of the necessity for national resistance to foreign claims. Of which resistance and the occasion for it, I shall have more to say in a moment.

Still, you go on to urge in your letter, " did not the Church of England become at the Reformation something of a national institution ? " Not at the Reformation ; but about a thousand years before. In

[1] Jewel to Bullinger, *Zurich Letters*, Vol. I, p. 33.

whatever sense the Church in England is national to-day, in that same sense she was national thirteen hundred years ago. The very term "Church of England" is found in Magna Charta. The Church came to this country, and was at first accepted by (not created by) the State as "the Church of the English," at the end of the sixth century, and has remained thus from that time onwards. The term "as by law established" does not refer to anything that was done at the Reformation, but to an establishment, that is to say, an adoption or acceptance by the State from the very dawn of that State in the little kingdom of Kent. I would advise you to read a short work by Lord Robert Cecil and Father Clayton, called *Our National Church,* which will give you an admirable sketch of the growth of the nation and the Church side by side. I know what is at the back of your mind; you think that at the Reformation the old Catholic religion was dropped, and a brand new "state-religion" was imposed upon the country by its legislators. Nothing of the kind happened. The Church remained the same, and the State remained its executor. It was both the Catholic Church and the National Church as it had been from the beginning. I own that, like yourself, I do not much care for the term "national Church." It certainly lends itself to the construction of a State-made institution; at the same time, I do not know what other term you are going to employ in order to distinguish the Church in one nation from the Church in another, and it is surely obvious that when St. Gregory the Great spoke of "the

Church of the English," he did not mean a church devised and created by the English people! My chief objection to the expression, however, is that it is too Roman: for the Roman Catholic Church is not merely, as the name signifies, national, but it aims at bringing the whole of Christendom under the control of one national life! A friend of mine who had "been to Rome" and returned said to me the other day: "I wanted to be a Catholic; I believe I am a Catholic; but I found that I could not possibly be an Italian!"

How really national Rome is, is not clearly seen until viewed from within. English and American Roman Catholics are constantly bewailing its want of *rapport* with the character and needs of other nations, and bitterly resenting the errors of its Italian episcopate. Recent events in France and Portugal, lost opportunities recorded in Ward's *Life of Newman*, and Lord Halifax's *Anglican Orders*, testify to this, and so do the exceedingly frank and valuable articles recently appearing in the *Universe* newspaper on the "leakage" from the Roman communion.[1]

The Italian genius of the Papacy is not the strength of the Roman Catholic communion but its weakness. I believe you will find this to be so wherever you go. Not for a moment do I mean that Italians are incapable of administration. I am simply reminding you of a principle that surely should be obvious to-day when we and our Allies, the Italians amongst them, are resisting to the

[1] July 7, 14, 1916.

utmost the usurpation of world-power on the part of one nation. If there is one truth more clearly discernible in history than another it is that God never intended one race to dominate mankind. "The kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it," was spoken not of Rome, but of the Heavenly Jerusalem, where there is "neither Jew nor Greek, Barbarian nor Scythian," but where all that is consecrate in a redeemed race is conserved and utilized. By no means let us dispute the right of Italian Catholics to participate in the government of this New Humanity, but, for that very reason, they cannot be allowed to Italianize the rest of Christendom. Think of the long succession of Italian popes, unbroken save by the presence of one Englishman ! One would surely have thought that even on the principle of the Roman Claim the Papacy would have been international in its composition. As it is, one cannot but be reminded of the verdict of Döllinger when he spoke of the Roman Church as the residuary legatee of the Roman Empire.

It remains, then, that the Reformation in England involved no injury to the constitution of the Catholic Church amongst us. The Church was national in name, but so it had been before, like the churches of Sardis and Smyrna ; the monarch held supremacy as the Christian head of the State in which the Church resided, and so had monarchs before ; scenes of violence and confusion marked the period ; ambitious and unscrupulous men sought to exploit the religious crisis in their own interests : but under the Providence

of God none was allowed to tamper vitally with the Church. It remained throughout the period what it was before, "the Church of the English," the only difference being that it threw off the usurped authority of the Bishop of Rome.

(2) So I pass to my next question: Was this Reformation necessary? It is easier to despise the Reformation than to grasp the magnitude of the disorders and abuses that led to it. No fair-minded student will deny that in view of Papal aggression and the state of religion throughout the country some kind of reform was imperative. That this had been felt for many years I shall hope to show under my third question. Financially, the English Church and the nation as well was being bled to death by the exacting demands of Rome. For years a sum larger than the revenues of the Crown was paid to foreign clergy. I am assuming you know all about "Peter's Pence," "Annates" and "Provisions" and the extortions which were wrung from the country by these devices, but in case you do not, I strongly advise you to read Trench's *Mediaeval Church History*, Chapters XVI, XVIII, and XXIX, and Aubrey Moore's *Lectures on the Reformation*; or, if you cannot easily obtain these, you will find the sum of the matter in Vernon Staley's *Catholic Religion*, pp. 85–96, and the sixth chapter of Cecil and Clayton's *Our National Church*. There was also the difficulty of appeal in ecclesiastical suits, and the shameless system of bribery by which alone such suits could obtain a hearing. When you speak as you do in your letters of the desirability of a

"central authority," you should bear in mind the abuses attendant on such in the later Middle Ages. Of all bureaucracies the world has ever known there has probably been none so cankered with corruption as the Papal "central authority" in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries! Then there was the hindrance to expanding national life by the "temporal power," a vast network of diplomacy of the most unscrupulous character, masquerading under objects ostensibly spiritual. Nation was played off against nation, one political interest against another. Freedom there was none, except at the price of excommunication. We have to live those times over again in the pages of honest historical research in order to understand the awful burden resting on those who were under Papal dominion. In the face of all this how puerile it is on the part of Roman writers to-day to say that the Reformation was caused by the King's divorce!

But there were also abuses of a more directly religious kind calling for reform. There was the iniquitous sale of "Indulgences" introduced by Leo X as a means of raising funds to build the great Church of St. Peter's at Rome. The idea of "Indulgences" was (and I am not aware that Rome has ever rescinded it) that the merits of Christ and the Saints were regarded as housed in a bank, upon which the Pope could draw for the benefit of the living and departed, in consideration of a scale of fees! Dr. Pusey considered that the sale of these "Indulgences," and the utterly false teaching that "floated" them," very chiefly caused the Reforma-

tion." There was the scandal of the friars, who were exempt from episcopal supervision, free to teach what they listed, and to take advantage of a populace only a degree more ignorant than themselves. It is not too much to say that under this teaching legend largely took the place of fact, and magic of faith. I know it is the fashion to-day to decry all talk of "Mediaeval superstition"; I should be sorry to use the expression from the standpoint of rationalism, but from the standpoint of the Catholic Faith I certainly believe it to be true that by the fifteenth century popular religion in England had degenerated into a few practices and beliefs little better than Magic. I believe that the great central Act of Worship was itself degraded into a superstition, and that it certainly was time the words "Receive authority to offer sacrifice to God" (words inserted in the Ordinal in the eleventh century) were either very gravely qualified, or else struck out in favour of the apostolic words which the Reformers inserted: "Take thou authority to preach the Word of God, and to minister the Holy Sacraments." There was also the infrequency of communion. Most people only communicated once a year, and you know that all the alterations in our English Communion Service were made in order to re-emphasize the fact that the Blessed Sacrament was given us by Christ as a means of communion with Him. There was also the withdrawal of the Chalice from the laity, an absolutely unwarrantable innovation made into law in 1415. The enforced celibacy of the parochial clergy was undoubtedly

a very great source of evil. I know it is the fashion with Protestants to make a great point of this, but while the resultant evils may have been overrated, it certainly was a source of evil, as no one who has read any mediaeval records can doubt. And it was a thing entirely arbitrary, and without a single respectable precedent to back it up! Peter was himself a married man, and St. Paul claimed that the apostles "had power to lead about a wife." Moreover, throughout the Uniat churches of the East, which are in communion with Rome, priests are not only allowed but compelled to marry. And, as Dr. Mason puts it, "if the man who says Mass by the Tigris must be married, it is not like the boasted logic of the Roman system to insist that the man who says Mass by the Thames must *not* be married." [1] Clerical celibacy narrowed the ecclesiastical mind, and the fact that many priests, and also popes and high ecclesiastics, evaded it had a disastrous effect on the morale of Church and nation.

And then there were also the scandals connected with the state of the monastic system. No doubt they have been exaggerated for party purposes. One would not, for example, depend on Froude for an accurate account of them. Yet they did admittedly exist, and while the suppression of so many religious houses was probably unnecessary, and was largely determined by the pilfering tendencies of the King and his new aristocracy, it was more than time such institutions were taken in hand, and their

[1] *Church Historical Society's Tracts*, No. II, p. 10.

purity guaranteed by some system of detached inspection.

You will gather that I am not defending everything that was done during the Reformation, nor am I denying the existence of true religion in England in the age preceding it. I am simply answering the question, Was a Reformation necessary? and I think that history leaves no room for doubt that the answer to that question is: Yes.

3. Well, then, if reformation in the English Catholic Church was necessary, the next question is: How was it to be gone about? in other words, Was there any precedent to justify a local or national Church undertaking its own reform?

It would seem that precedent went back at least as early as the Apostle John, for among the Epistles to the Seven Churches with which the Apocalypse opens there are urgent exhortations to self-reform, without any reference to metropolitan Sees. If, as Bossuet affirms, the idea that bishops receive their jurisdiction from the Pope, and are, as it were, his vicars, is "a late invention . . . and ought to be banished from Christian schools as unheard of for twelve centuries," [1] we may look in vain, as we certainly do, for any trace of one See applying to another for permission to carry out its own reforms. I am not forgetting the Epistle which Clement of Rome wrote to the Church at Corinth urging them to reform in the matter of party-strife; but it is to be noted that Clement exhorts them to be in subjection to their own rulers.[2]

[1] *Defensio Declar. Cleri Gallicani*, Bk. VIII. c. xiv.

[2] Ep. S. Clement. i., ii., vii., viii., xlii., li., lii.

"Most of the documents of the second century," says Mr. C. H. Turner,[1] "in its earlier years the Ignatian Letters, and an ever increasing bulk of evidence as the years go on, show us the *local* churches complete in themselves, with an officer at the head of each (a bishop) who concentrates in his hands both the powers of the local ministers, and those also which had at first been reserved exclusively for the 'general' ministry, but who is himself strictly limited in the extent of his jurisdiction to a single church, as were the humbler presbyter-bishops from whom he received his name. . . . In and with the bishop the local church sufficed in itself for the extraordinary as well as for the ordinary functions of Church-government and Christian life."

It is perhaps difficult for us to-day to imagine a church so truly self-contained as was one of these *geographically* distinct churches. As the century advances we find the laity taking the same prominent part in the government of their church as we remark in the *Acts* and the *Epistles*. The consent of the people was a necessary preliminary to all procedure, whether the ordering of priests and deacons or the purifying of the Church from error and innovation. Dr. Gwatkin[1] contends against Rothe[2] that the emphatic language of the Second Century writers is significant of the absence of any sort of appeal from one church to another. Dr. Hort says[3] "the body of the Christians in these churches by wise counsels did for themselves as a community

[1] *Cambridge Mediaeval Hist.*, I, vi., p. 145.
[2] Rothe, *Anfänge der christlichen Kirche*, p. 146.
[3] Hastings' *Bible Dictionary*, Art. "Church Government."

what the steersman or pilot does for the ship." [1]

To come to times nearer those of the Reformation, we find that in Spain there was a thorough and deeply conservative reform imposed upon the national Church by the monarchs, after which they insisted, sternly though respectfully, that Rome should reform itself.[2] And the subsequent purification of Rome, so far as it went, was the work of Spanish kings, using their dominions in Italy as a menace which the Pope dared not disregard. At the time of the assembling of the Council of Constance there was, says Creighton :

" A widespread and serious desire throughout Europe for a reformation of ecclesiastical abuses . . . it was felt that a remedy must be found for the evils which beset the entire body (of the Church) ; the gross extortions of the Pope and the Curia must be checked and their occasion done away ; the Papal invasion of ecclesiastical patronage all over Christendom must be stopped ; the ordinary machinery of church-government which had been weakened by the constant interference of the Pope must be again restored ; the clergy whose knowledge, morality, and zeal had declined must be brought back to discipline, so that their waning influence over earnest men might be re-established." [3]

Accordingly, the Prelates and Proctors of England, France, Germany and Poland, Bohemia, and Provence presented to the Pope a list of grievances to which they called his attention.[4] Unhappily,

[1] *The Christian Ecclesia*, p. 159.

[2] E. W. Watson, *The Church of England*, Williams & Norgate, pp. 114–5.

[3] *History of the Papacy*, I, ii. I. [4] Ibid. I, p. 253.

the promise of a future Council enabled the Pope to put aside for the present all questions of reform; and the greed of the chief members of the Council to seek their own promotion from a Pope whose liberality and kindness were well known, made them indifferent to anything beyond their own interest.[1] So it happened to petition after petition for reform throughout what are known as "the Reforming Synods," i.e., the Synods which never got nearer reform than proposing it. The result of this *impasse* was a state of tension on which the scrutiny of the False Decretals fell like a spark on tinder.

Of course your Roman friends will tell you that the very fact of the national churches appealing to Rome for power to reform proves the Roman supremacy. It proves *a* Roman supremacy at that date, which we have seen to be the upgrowth of mediaeval polity. But upon what did that supremacy rest? Upon the False Decretals. Once these were proved to be fictitious, the "supremacy," as we have seen, vanished before a restoration of the old national autonomy of churches.

Again, you will find it sometimes urged by Roman Catholics that as the English Church was a "missionary product of Rome," it could not throw off Roman jurisdiction without ceasing to be a part of the Church Catholic. We have already seen that the origin of the English Church is complex, but even supposing it to have been the fruit of Rome's sole effort, there is no sort of precedent by which a "missionary church" is held in perpetual allegi-

[1] *History of the Papacy*, I., p. 253.

ance to the See which planted it. On the contrary, the African Church was undoubtedly the product of Rome's sole effort, and yet when the African Church rejected the Claim made by the Bishop of Rome, it did not lose its rights as an integral part of the whole Catholic Church.[1]

Once more, it is argued that the English Church lost its Catholic nature at the Reformation because it then repudiated Roman Canon Law. I have just been reading a very able article by Chancellor Dibdin on Mr. Ogle's new book on Roman Canon Law in England.[2] Dibdin sums up the evidence of Stubbs, Maitland, and Ogle thus :

" The repudiation of Roman Canon Law by the English Church in the sixteenth century was no breaking away from the Universal Church, for the sufficient reason that Roman Canon Law was no part of the essential equipment of the Universal Church, but a comparatively modern introduction of doubtful origin and partial acceptance. . . . There were English and Welsh Church Courts where an English and Welsh Church Law was administered long before the Pope had usurped the right to legislate for the whole Christian Church. The so-called breach of legal continuity at the reformation was certainly a breach with the mediaeval system of church law, but it was also a recurrence to an earlier and better system of national and ecclesiastical liberty."

I am afraid this has proved a very long letter. Let me briefly sum up the points, beginning with the last :

[1] See Denny, *Papalism*, p. 696, par. 1296 ; also p. 594, par. 1144.

[2] *Quarterly Review*, Oct. 1912, p. 434.

The Papal Claim having proved invalid, the inherent right of national churches to self-government holds good. There is, therefore, no obstacle to a local church taking in hand its own reform, provided such reform is a genuine reform, i.e., that it is necessary to the life of the church, and that it does not impair the constitution of that church as a part of the Church Catholic.

Of the necessity for reform in the English Church in the sixteenth century, and long before, history affords us abundant proof. We have also seen that reform was carried out without any loss to our Catholic heritage; the Episcopate remained apostolic; the Creeds were retained; the "Church of the English" reasserted her claim to be the *Catholic* Church in this land. She retained the word "Catholic" in her Prayer Book and formularies and public worship.[1] And so, while the churches in Germany, Geneva, and Holland repudiate the term and became what they are to-day, schismatic sects, the English Church made no such repudiation, and remained what she is to-day, the Catholic Church in this country.

So far, then, you have every reason to rest in the church of your baptism. The things that distress you are the result of ignorance and misunderstanding, but they cannot possibly *un*make the Church. Rest secure on the foundation of the Apostles. Continue to receive our Lord through

[1] See a paper by the Rev. C. F. Rogers, M.A., "What is Catholicity?" in *Comment and Criticism*, Feb. 1915.

His appointed Means. And in conclusion, may I say this : do not forget that our Lord has nowhere promised us a perfect Church here ; rather He has placed before us the bearing of the Cross, the enduring "for the brethren's sake" and for our own souls' discipline, those things that go against the grain even in the higher matters of religious privilege. Try also to remember this : that in so far as pride and impatience were mixed up with the process of reform (though, thank God, there was no schism) we must expect to have to work out the penalty "to the uttermost farthing." Ought we not to deem it a privilege, if we have to endure cold and bald services of a Protestant type, or go far to make our Confession, or say our Catholic devotions in the privacy of our rooms, to do all and bear all as reparation for the faults of our fathers ? This is the lowly path of penitence and hope. "Them that are meek shall He guide in judgment ; and such as are gentle, them shall He learn His way."

IX

Want of Uniformity in the English Church

I AM indeed glad to know that you are more at rest as to the continuity of the English Church. That is the root of the matter. But you ask me again : What of the present divisions within her ? and in this letter I want to discuss some of the instances you mention. But, first of all, don't you think your expression, " divisions," is too harsh ? Surely, if you test the English Church by Communion (and I don't know what other test you are going to apply) you will not find we are " divided." Where do you find any of the three schools of thought, or whatever they are called, refusing to communicate with one another ? True, you mention the case of a bishop abroad refusing to be in communion with a bishop of one of the English Sees ; but the reason alleged is that the latter is heretical, either personally or in his patronage ; so that it is not a question of party division, but of one bishop being convinced of a brother bishop being in error and himself desiring to repudiate the error. As to the regularity of the Bishop of Zanzi-

bar's proceeding, I can express no opinion. The unhappy circumstance is certainly not without precedent under the Papacy, when Bishops repudiated one another, and Nicephorus excommunicated the Pope! But whatever may be the issue of this breach, I think you will agree that it is abnormal, and that the differences of opinion and practice at present existing amongst us do not preclude our communion one with another, so that, with your leave, we will discard the term "divisions," and use "differences" instead.

Now, *the* question that we have to ask about these differences is: Do they unmake us as a Church? For example, you cite the fact that one bishop will not license assistant priests to a cure in which Eucharistic vestments are in use; but are Eucharistic vestments essential to the nature of the Sacrament? I agree with you that to see a priest officiating at the Altar in a surplice and an academical badge "gives one a shudder," but it does not impair the great Act he is performing, nor the benefits you receive from It. Again, you complain of the use of leavened bread at your parish church; I agree that both on grounds of Scripture and Catholic custom, the use of unleavened bread, or, as we term it, the Wafer, is to be preferred; but you surely have no doubt as to the reality of your Communion on such a score as this! Then, again, you tell me that a bishop has recently declined to institute a certain priest to a living because of a sermon preached by the latter in honour of our Lady. I shall have something more

to say presently on the general subject of devotions to our Lady, but you must remember that while the whole Church has conferred on Our Lady the title of Theotokos, the Mother of God, there is throughout the Church the utmost difference of opinion as to devotions to Her. I should incline to agree with you that there is nothing in the language of the sermon in question at all incompatible with English Churchmanship, but the bishop is of a different opinion, and he has a right to his opinion, and being supreme in his diocese, he is perfectly right in refusing a cure of souls to the priest in question. In so doing, he is not rejecting the title Theotokos, or anything it involves. He is not denying the Incarnation and thereby plunging his diocese into heresy. He is not unmaking the Church.

Then you speak of differences among our bishops on the subject of Reservation. This is an enormously difficult subject. That you have found visits to the Blessed Sacrament a great aid to devotion I can well understand, and I am glad you have found the practice possible where you have been staying; but pray remember that no such devotion was known in the Church for centuries, and that the great Church of the East where the Blessed Sacrament is always reserved for the purpose of communicating the sick, in accordance with primitive practice, does not reserve for purposes of devotion. If it has indeed been the Will of our Lord in later times so to reveal Himself to the faithful, let us be thankful that there is nothing in our English Church to disallow the devotion; but it is impossible to regard the practice

of Reservation as a *sine quâ non* of the Church. In other words, we are not unmade as a Church if we do not have It.

You complain that there is no sanction or recognition in the Prayer Book of prayers for the Dead. It is true that in 1552 the petition for the repose of the Faithful Departed was deleted from the First Prayer Book. One cannot help regarding this as a blemish in our Liturgy, yet we must remember that absence of recognition does not amount to prohibition, and that in most, if not in all dioceses to-day the ancient practice is fully restored. God has used this time of national mourning to quicken our sense of the unseen world, and of the needs of souls in a state of preparation for the Beatific Vision. Surely this is one of the many proofs of the presence of Divine Grace with us as a Church? Ought we not rather to build upon this in hope than to lament the shortcomings of an episode in our history?

Akin to this is what you say as to Invocation of Saints. I say, "akin" to it, for I am more and more convinced from the records of the early Church, such, e.g., as the inscriptions in the Catacombs, that the Church both prayed for, and "invoked" the prayers of, the same Faithful Departed. The words, "May he rest in peace," and "Pray for us," would seem to be twin aspirations of an instinct enlightened and sanctified by the Faith. I suppose that by "Invocation" you mean something of this sort? Rome would bind us down to invoking only those Saints whom she has "canonized": Saints which have successfully passed the various processes

involved in "beatification" and "canonization." Perhaps you did not fully understand this? in that case I refer you to the Article on "Canonization" in Addis and Arnold's *Catholic Dictionary*.

The English Church, on the other hand, places no restriction on your praying to, as well as for, your dear ones with all the simplicity with which the primitive Church appealed to its own Departed. You may, in addition to this, experience some special devotion to one of the great Saints—such as St. Joseph, or St. Philip Neri, and if you do feel this, you are certainly right in asking for the intercession of such as well as of those you knew in the flesh.

And this, I think, is a suitable place to say what I want to say about your deep and praiseworthy devotion to our Lady. Do, pray, continue it! It is a great sign of grace that you have been prompted to appeal to Her. No one can seriously consider Her, and Her position as "Mother of God," without perceiving that she has a place and prerogative second to none save Her Divine Son. What can be more conformable to the will of the Saviour than to ask Her that "we may be worthy of the promises of Christ"? I assure you, you have no need to quit "the Church of the English" to put this devotion to full effect. It is true, the dogma of the Immaculate Conception has not been formally accepted by us, but the language of English churchmen since the Reformation leaves no room to doubt that such is a legitimate pious opinion amongst us. For example, Jeremy Taylor speaks of Her as "from conception a spotless maid"; and again, "there

was no sin in her conception," while Dr. Frank, Master of Pembroke (1665), speaks of "the Immaculate Virgin Mother, the Woman clothed with the sun . . . the Gate of Heaven . . . the Mother of the Everlasting God, made Queen of Heaven." [1] Bishop Bull says that "her nature was miraculously conceived and formed." Bishop Montagu says: "for Her alone we assert, with the schoolmen, a pre-election (*prærogativum*) of Grace." And again, "we contemplate her with a holy and solemn awe as Immaculate." You will find many more quotations bearing out what I say in *The Blessed Virgin and Anglican Divines*, by R. Bickersteth (C.L.A., 6*d*.).

Of course the great excellence of English devotions to Mary is their freedom from exaggeration of her merit. We cannot possibly use such language as "Mary, our *only* refuge"; "*sole* hope of sinners," or accept such teaching as this: "Often we shall be heard more quickly if we have recourse to Mary, than we should be if we called on the Name of Jesus our Saviour." [2] We justly feel about a religion that speaks in that way that whatever it is, it is not Christianity, since Christ is not its *centre*.

The evangelical spirit of Catholicism is that Christ is the centre of our hope and that God has, in Him, "freely given us all things," so that, as long as we have this clearly in mind, we need not fear to realize that communion with the saints which is a

[1] See Pusey's *Eirenicon*, II, 417.

[2] Alfonso di Liguori's *Glories of Mary*. For parallel sayings see Littledale, *Plain Reasons*, pp. 53–61.

part of our religious instinct enlightened and purified by the Faith. At the same time I cannot help feeling glad that the English Church has not prescribed Invocation in public. My own experience is that devotions of this kind are more potent when practised in private. The rosary said in the privacy of one's own room is surely more helpful than when used collectively. And I think the same applies to prayers to the Departed. I cannot think, e.g., that if the rosary were said at a First Evensong in a cathedral it would be very profitable, or that if we had a Litany of Saints at Morning Prayer it would be quite what it is before a crucifix in our rooms. In this, of course, I may be quite wrong, and at all events you will not find it difficult to-day to join others in the English Church in such devotions.

But I fear I am dwelling altogether too long on the special instances you bring forward! so with a reference to one other of these I will conclude this part of my letter. You speak of the "great difference with regard to the practice of Confession." I should have thought that so far as authority is concerned there was no room for difference at all. The Prayer Book expressly says that if any cannot quiet his conscience, he is to go to a priest. If you had said that there was a difference in the action of our consciences, or, what it really comes to, a difference in our sincere and genuine *penitence*, I should have thought you were nearer the mark. Not that I wish you to infer that all those who do not make their Confession are impenitent; many have not

been taught about it. This, I allow, is a terrible reproach to us as a Church. But it does not *un*-Church us. Provision is made for the sacrament of penance, and if the people are ignorant the blame rests, not on the Church, but on a negligent priesthood. Every priest in the English Church is bound by his vows to hear Confession, and, by implication, to teach it. If you have any difficulty in making your Confession, you should write at once to your bishop.

You sum up these special instances by complaining of "the general lack of uniformity." You tell me that if you "go into a Roman Church here in the South, and then into one in the North, you will find the same things going on, and the same doctrines being taught," but that "in our churches we are all teaching different things." Surely, there is a good deal of exaggeration in what you say! I do not deny our differences; I do not deny that considerably more uniformity would seem to be desirable. What I would point out is that the differences lie in things which are, in nearly every case, superficial compared with the great essentials of Religion. Where do you find that "we are all teaching different things" about the Incarnation, the Atonement, the Nature of God, the necessity of penitence, and of faith in Christ as the only Saviour, and of Christian Duty? Take your Creeds, the only Rule of Faith recognized in the Universal Church, and show me what articles are omitted or contradicted in our churches. And surely, side by side with these fundamentals of the faith, the things in which our

teaching does differ are *relatively* unimportant? I should have thought that the very fact that our differences *seem* so striking is proof that they are confined to the surface.

I think, therefore, that you and others tend to overestimate our differences—not so much the fact of them, as their significance. This tendency is probably fomented by discouragement and lack of sympathy in the things which, as a Catholic, you have learned to love and value, and so you are thrown into a state of irritation and impatience in which you cease to bear in mind the great doctrines and practices on which we are agreed. Do not think that in saying this I am presuming to blame you. No one who has passed through your difficulties can fail to sympathize with you. I only suggest that you should take into account your own very disturbed state as one of the "causes of dissatisfaction"; because in such a state we are often inclined to exaggerate what is wrong and overlook what is right. Try to look at things from a more detached standpoint, try to imagine you are advising a friend rather than feeling your own way, and I think you will admit the large amount of unity there is amongst us, and at the same time that not one of the things in which we differ *un*makes us as a Church.

I also think that we are not only inclined to overestimate our differences, but to under-value the use of legitimate differences. The sort of thing I have in mind is the way in which the Church has been allowed the freest scope in arranging its devotions.

Think of all the different Liturgies of the Church: that of St. James, St. Mark, St. Clement; the Armenian, the Coptic, the Syro-Greek, the Mozarabic, the Ambrosian. Surely, if we look to find uniformity anywhere it is in all that centres round that chief Act of Worship which has always been the most venerable institution of Christianity! Yet even here the free play of national taste and temperament has not been excluded, and the differences thus tolerated have resulted in the richness of a manifold worship.

In this and many other directions differences have proved a real asset in spiritual progress; though we can become so obsessed by the desire for uniformity as to forget this. We can come to look upon difference as a vice in itself. We can forget that harmony is not monotony, and difference is not discord. We can forget that the days in which the English Church most nearly approached uniformity, the eighteenth century, were the deadliest period of her whole existence. Further, we can forget that where differences are discordant to-day, the discord is caused not by men forsaking Catholic practice, but getting it back.

Again, I think we are often ignorant of the great differences within the Church of Rome. We regard it as an uninterrupted unity. I assure you it is very much otherwise. To those who know that Church from within, the Ultramontane, the Moderate and the Modernist parties represent differences far more fundamental and divergent than anything within the English Church; differences which

nothing but a miracle of Grace can ever compose.[1] It is perfectly ridiculous for Roman controversialists to try to make capital out of our differences when their own divisions lead to a system of espionage which amounts to a detective department! Moreover, these divisions of theirs become more and more accentuated, whereas you will admit that there is a very remarkable convergence of aim among the parties in our own Church to-day—a convergence on the whole towards what is Catholic. I know, as a matter of fact, that numbers in the Church of Rome are looking to us as the probable ground of union in the future.

In conclusion, I come back to the position which I think must satisfy every Catholic mind: we have the apostolic presence with us, and even were we more divided than was the ancient Church at Corinth, we should still be a part of the sphere of Divine Grace. We have the Sacraments, and that fact overrides everything else. We may be, in Manning's famous phrase, "a city of confusion." In some sense the Church has ever been such. But that does not remove from underneath us the apostolic foundations of the city. Rather it increases our responsibility not to quit the city but to reduce the confusion.

Have you considered the matter in the light of your own responsibility? To quit a city solely because of its confusion and discomfort is surely neither patriotic nor courageous. I could not have urged this before, while you were in doubt as to

[1] See below, Letter from a returned convert, p. 116.

your actual foundations, but now that you tell me you are convinced of our continuity, I do urge you most earnestly to weigh the responsibility you incur if you quit what is not only a post of privilege but one of trust.

X

Other Causes of Dissatisfaction

NO, I am not in the least disappointed because you "don't get straight all at once." We are creatures of experience and reasoning as well as obedience, and we have to reason and experience as well as obey. What you are really going through is, I believe, a deepening and clarifying of the spiritual life. The process is a long one, and the pace cannot be forced.

Go on "telling the whole mind out." Set down the "obstinate questionings" as they occur. There is always a measure of relief in expression, and certainly nothing helps us to define our difficulties like writing.

Forgive me one question: what about your inner life all this time? I mean chiefly about prayer and Communion. I know the temptation that comes with the sort of strain through which you are passing. The agitation returns with tenfold force whenever we try to pray. Our Communions seem so unreal that we are tempted to think it a sort of sacrilege to go on with them. I assure you all this

is a temptation. In such times of strain we must cling to our devotions however unreal they may seem. When you feel unable to pray, read some short psalm; if you are distracted at Communion, remember that those who travail and are heavy laden are bidden draw near. Don't let anything persuade you to give in about this.

And now to resume our discussion: are you not rather unduly influenced by popular conceptions? You reply to my previous letter by saying that you don't think I represent the popular conception of things in the English Church. Very likely not. If you went to Father X., and told him that because of what you had read of popular conceptions of the Trinity and the Saints among the Irish peasantry or the Comasco, you believed that the real religion of Rome was polytheism, how he would laugh! I object just as strongly to our gauging the real spirit of the English Church by the conceptions of semi-instructed Church people. You say that the popular conception of the Eucharist amongst us is the "receptionist," and that this precludes the sacrificial aspect. I am not sure you are right in saying that the receptionist is the popular conception, but, however that may be, I am quite clear that the sacrificial aspect is not excluded. Bishop Gore (*Roman Catholic Claims*, pp. 175–7) admits that "in her reaction from . . . abuses connected with 'massing priests' the Church of England unduly obscured and threw into the background the doctrine of the Eucharistic Sacrifice," but he

maintains that Article XXXI is only intended jealously to guard the unique completeness of the Sacrifice made by Christ upon the Cross. Can this be too strenuously asserted? and does not pre-Reformation history afford very real ground for insisting on the "receptionist" aspect of the Eucharist? The Blessed Sacrament was given us by our Lord for the purpose of communion with Himself by reception, as well as for that of commemorating His Sacrifice. We are not only to "do this" (ποιεῖν), not only to "show His Death till He come"; but to "take, eat," to "drink all of this." We may certainly assist at the Holy Sacrifice by prayer and worship without the act of communion, yet I do not see how we efface the Sacrifice when we communicate. To-day, Rome teaches her people that each Mass is a substantive sacrifice distinct from, though in some way dependent upon, that of the Cross. That, surely, to say the least, is a very exaggerated way of stating the sacrificial aspect.[1]

But you know that the sacrificial aspect is taught and upheld in the English Church and always has been, and that surely is sufficient for you, despite any amount of popular ignorance on the subject.

Then you bring up that old bugbear that the English Church was begun at the Reformation, and you instance a lot of Churchmen who believe this. Does their believing it make it true? Does their believing it commit you to it? No more than the Roman Church is committed to the superstitions

[1] *Larger Catechism*, Ch. V, § 1.

of the Sicilians! Unhappily we are reaping the fruits of a good deal of party teaching about the Reformation, but, on the other hand, well-instructed English Churchmen have a firmer sense of unity with the Past than have Roman Catholics. The latter discourage this sense, and logically, because they regard the Church as the "living voice," compared with which appeal to the Past is negligible. Nothing seems to excite the ridicule of Rome more than our appeal to the New Testament and to early tradition. I shall have something to say about the "living voice" later on, but, in passing, I would observe that if that "living voice" be, as Fr. Richardson defines it, "an absolute, peremptory power from which there is no appeal, commanding the assent of the intellect in God's Name," of what concern can our unity with the past be at all? Of what concern can it be to have a "rule of faith" in the Creed, or indeed to be assured that any such Person as Jesus Christ ever lived? I do not think you have yet entered into the mentality of Rome as regards the absoluteness of the "living voice," or the way in which the present illimitable sovereignty of the Pope would render you indifferent to the Past altogether.

So that, again, over against a popular misconception about the Past in the English Church, you have to set an error officially sanctioned and taught on the part of Rome.

Then again, as to what you say about "a lax and latitudinarian State-religion" in the last century: it is true that English Catholics have had

to fight for their rights against the intrusions of legislation; but it is also true that they have won, and that *they could not have won had they not been expressing the real spirit of the English Church.* You say that the Oxford men and their followers were regarded as innovators. I think you forget how complex and far-reaching an affair the Reformation was, and the extent to which the strong action of the State in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries misled the nation as to the functions of legislation. The Oxford men were reproached with "undoing the work of the Reformers," and there were aspects in which the work of the Reformers had to be undone. The great problem of freeing the Church from the Mediaeval Papacy could not be accomplished in a century or in three centuries. The return to primitive church government had to be accomplished slowly. But in and through it all the Church retained its Apostolicity, and when a hundred years ago men set themselves anew to defining the relative functions of the Church and the State, the former emerged gradually clearly from the inevitable confusions of a great movement. The right of the Church to decide finally for herself all spiritual causes is to-day secure. Secular legislation no longer interferes with Catholic doctrine and practice, and though the appointment of bishops and other dignitaries still rests nominally with the State, there is every reason for believing that such appointments are made on the advice of eminent Churchmen. In fact to-day the Church is practically autonomous, and it was impossible to read the

leader in *The Times* the other day[1] on the proposals of the Archbishop's Committee without the conviction that at length the State acknowledges that the Church can be governed by the Church and by the Church only.

Now, if the reverse of all this had happened; if in the last century a number of Catholic and scholarly men had protested against Erastianism and Latitudinarianism, and had raised their voice in vain, or had been forced to withdraw into a sort of Catholic sect, you might have some misgiving, if not as to the apostolicity of the Church in England, at any rate as to the practical possibility of her ever being able to emerge from the complexities of the Reformation. But no such disaster has befallen us. We are entering to-day into all the freedom and greatness of our Catholic heritage. To lose heart now, or to identify the English Church with certain remnants of uninstructed "protestantism," seems to me to be inexcusable!

So that if I were you I should not be disturbed as to popular views on this or that. If we stop to canvass such we shall never rest either in our own part of the Church or any other. If by the grace of God I am a Catholic, what does it matter to me what may be the opinions of those who are associated with me in parish or diocese? If I am a Catholic, I am a Catholic, and the condition of those about me cannot alter the fact. The question that really divides us from Rome is whether our Lord founded

[1] July 8, 1916, on the Report of the Archbishop's Committee.

His Church on one apostle or on all. Having answered that question, and made sure that our English Church is in the succession of the apostles, we need not be disturbed were the popular condition of that Church ten thousand times more ignorant or Protestant or Erastian than it was in the days before Keble.

Some years ago a friend drew a very useful distinction for me between disorders in the Church that are functional and those which are organic. He was, of course, taking his analogy from disorders in the body. Functional disorder occurs when the organ is intact, but impaired in function. Organic disease implies that the organ itself is so damaged that it cannot fulfil its functions, and so becomes lost to the body, even if it does not bring about death in the other organs. Functional disorder, though it limits the use of the member for the time being, does not necessitate its removal from the body, nor does it even impair its soundness.[1]

As examples of organic disease, I should instance any conciliar understanding that the Three Orders are not essential to the Christian Ministry, or any general denial of the doctrine of baptismal grace, or of the Real Presence of the Lord in the Eucharist, or any official tampering with the Creed. I merely give these as instances, not as an exhaustive list. Were any of these to occur, the Church, or that part of it in which they did occur, would *ipso facto* cease

[1] See the *English Church Review*, Oct. 1914, where the analogy is worked out by the author in a paper entitled, "In Relief of Perplexity."

to be what our Lord intended her to be. I think it is obvious from our previous considerations that none of these organic disorders is present in the English Church at the present time. Functional disorders, on the other hand, e.g., the way in which certain doctrines are popularly regarded, or the want of systematic teaching, or the neglect of worship, or the emphasis of certain acts of worship at the expense of others, while they interfere with the mission and purpose of the Church and cry aloud for remedy, and may even develop into organic mischief, do not destroy the nature of the Church, or prevent the infusion of Divine grace.

If the intention[1] of the "Minister" does not affect the purpose of God Whose minister he is, it is difficult to see how any misunderstanding of the ministerial office can invalidate the office itself. Suppose, e.g., that a priest administers Holy Baptism without himself believing in baptismal regeneration, surely the baptism is valid and the regenerating process has taken place! Article XXVI would seem to deal with this question. There it is stated that "the unworthiness of the Ministers hinders not the effect of the sacrament": true, the "unworthiness" there referred to applies to moral conduct, but surely the same holds good of belief or perception. "Forasmuch as they (unworthy ministers) do not minister the Word and Sacraments in their own name but in Christ's, and do minister by His commission and authority, we may use their ministry in receiving the sacra-

[1] Article XXVI.

ments." If "the sacraments be effectual because of Christ's institution and promise, although administered by evil men," it surely remains that they are effectual although they are administered and received by those who are unconscious of their full power or proper nature.

Functional disorder of one kind or another has always attended the Church in every age, and, in the conditions of the Church on earth, probably always will, and while we ought to do all we can towards remedy, I think that you and others are quite unnecessarily sensitive to the differences which such disorder creates. To say more as to this, however, would be only to repeat what I said in my last letter.

You go on in your letter to compare our devotions unfavourably with those in the Roman Catholic Church. You say, moreover, that you "never feel the same atmosphere" in an English church which you do on entering a Roman. Don't you think that the cause of this difference lies a good deal in yourself? Don't you bring with you, on entering a Roman Catholic Church, a degree of expectancy which you don't always remember to bring into one of your own? It seems to me that we receive according to our faith.

I should be sorry to belittle Roman devotion, or to think that they have not a good deal to teach us in this respect. At the same time you will find it a mistake to take your ideas of Roman devotion from the spectacle of a "Pardon," or from the simple and touching May devotions in some of the poorer

districts in Rome itself. My own criticism would be that devotion in the English Church, if less intense in part, is more evenly distributed. I cannot, for instance, imagine a more touching devotion than the restrained yet deep reality pervading the majority of those attending an Early Celebration. I should also be inclined to say that worship in the English Church is on a broader basis, and makes a larger demand on the whole worship-power of the believer. It is not too much to say that Roman worship centres mainly around the Blessed Sacrament and our Lady at the expense of those profound movements of the soul in contemplation of the attributes of God. Those who have found help from an occasional attendance at Benediction, or visit to the Blessed Sacrament, or from hearing the Litany of Loretto or the Rosary, would, I feel convinced, find these devotions wear very thin when deprived of a worship that gives scope to all the faculties of heart and mind. Of course there is the Mass, and that is of unfailing freshness; but then there is the Mass also in the English Church, and your question refers to devotions that are purely Roman, or almost so.

One great lack in Rome, admitted and lamented by a great number of Roman Catholics, is the comparatively small part which an intelligent use of Holy Scripture holds in their devotions.[1] The Scriptures are the very groundwork and structure of worship: a fact that we shall rediscover when the present craze for endless "little books" has passed

[1] See Tyrrell, *Mediaevalism*, pp. 28, 29.

away and left us again face to face with the great things of a spiritual instinct inspired by the Holy Ghost.

And I think that much of what I have said above would also apply to what you complain of as the intrusion of worldliness into the English Church. To one seeking an unworldly environment, Rome, especially as viewed here in England, presents many attractions. There is less official connexion with the State, a more democratic outlook, a commanding position over rank and power, etc. Yet on nearer approach, one is bitterly disappointed. I dislike comparisons of this kind, yet you must remember that I am replying to them, not instituting them. Those who know the Roman Church from within, know her to be "a going concern on a purely business footing": a remark often heard in Roman circles. Pew rents, the auctioneering of seats in churches, lotteries and such means of raising funds are freely resorted to. Preference is given the well-to-do. The social spirit is bourgeois and conventional to a degree. The Englishman distressed by class-differences in his own church will be astonished to find them much accentuated in Rome. It is commonly supposed to be the Church of the poor, and some of its servants, especially among the religious orders, have done noble work among the poor, but there is another side to all this, the side Tyrrell referred to in his terrible indictment of "a selfish and godless bureaucracy."[1] Those who forget the work the English Church is doing for

[1] *Mediaevalism.*

the poor in our cities, towns and villages, and concentrate their gaze on the Squire's pew and the bishops in the "Lords," will not find the balance redressed when they enter Rome.

The other day a friend of mine who is in Rome asked as delicately as he could what he was supposed to contribute for the saying of some Masses. He had no need for delicacy. "One franc, fifty," was the prompt reply, "or six Masses for five francs." Further, he found it the custom to "tip" the server twenty cents. Probably such a business-like arrangement is not in the least offensive to Italians. But imagine it amongst ourselves! We should have to alter the whole of our religious instinct to match! If you have had anything to do with servers you can imagine how they would stand aghast at the idea of being tipped for what they regard as the privilege of their lives! It is, after all, a question of mentality. Roman customs may suit the Italian mentality very well, and that mentality may be quite as good in its way as is ours, but I can discover no reason why we should scrap ours and adopt theirs. I venture to think that the moment you got inside Rome, you would want to reform a good many things on the model of the devotion and unworldliness of the English Church.

Further, you would find that large numbers of Roman Catholics envy us the real grip we have on the great central things of the Catholic Faith. I was reading the other day that delightful book of Mrs. Aubrey Waterfield, *Home Life in Italy*, and I marked the following passage:

"My hosts were desirous to know something of our 'English religion,' and as well as I could I tried to give them a brief outline of our faith. Their amazement was a comedy. 'What!' they all called out, even Signorina Lucia (a very bigotted person) joining in the chorus, 'what is this you tell us? You are baptized, you believe in God, you say the *Credo*, but—but—well, you are not pagans, but Christians like ourselves! Who would have imagined such a thing, *sangue della Madonna*!' I could not help laughing at the sight of their bewildered faces, and then I hastened to explain that we owe no allegiance to the Pope, and did not believe in his infallibility. But this difference they waved aside with a '*ma che Infallibilita!*': that was a doctrine of yesterday, a caprice of that good but misguided Pio Nono. It was my turn to be surprised, and still more so when they told me that people now expressed ideas which a few years ago they hardly dared to think. Warming to my subject, and no more fearing to tread on unwelcome ground, I touched upon other matters of the Faith as held by the English Church. They were keen to hear all, and at the end, Sor Angiolini turned towards me with a deeply thoughtful expression, and said: 'Send your priests here to teach us this religion. It seems a very beautiful one, and they will find many to join'" (pp. 202–3).

Such a testimony is obviously free from special pleading, and I quote it as a specimen of much more to the same purpose which you will find in literature of travel, and which you will encounter yourself on going abroad. I acknowledge, as I have done from the first, that the question between Rome and ourselves does not turn upon points such as these, but you seem so favourably impressed with Roman devotions and customs at the expense of our own, that I must beg you, as one who has had experience of both, to compare the two as fairly

and fully as you can before you allow the fascination of what is novel and partially understood to draw you away.

Last week I received a letter from one who, some time ago, made his submission to Rome, and now desires to be received back into the English Church. His letter is so much to the point as to many of the things that have been troubling you, that I have asked and received his permission to send it on to you. I enclose it herewith.[1]

But you will bear in mind as you read it, that nothing of the kind he records could warrant our holding aloof from Rome if she did not make a claim upon us which cannot be substantiated. If their devotions and customs were all that could be desired we could not make terms with them on their present demands, any more than we could stay in the English Church, however perfect she might be, were the demands of Rome true. So that I do not think we shall get much further by instituting comparisons. The real problem stands on higher ground, and on that ground I have tried to deal with it. For us who are convinced of the Apostolicity of the Church, and of the fact of our own Succession, it is no problem at all. There are, in spite of what my friend says in his letter, many lessons we can learn from Roman Catholics—many which we need to learn. We must desire unity, and pray for it, but the real object of our prayer must be that Rome may cease to found the Universal Church on the foundation of *one* apostle, and

[1] See p. 116.

acknowledge the ancient verity of the Creed, that the Catholic Church is also the Apostolic Church.

I had intended to write something about "the living voice," but find I must postpone this to another letter.

APPENDED LETTER FROM A RETURNED CONVERT

"I was, as you know, led to make my submission mainly because of dissatisfaction with the English Church. Every one seemed at liberty to make his own rule and live his own religious life. There was a great want of reality about the devotions at my Church. People were horrified at the idea of Confession; scarcely any, so far as I knew, made their Communion fasting; there was the utmost indifference to Saints' Days; the only difference in Lent was a 'strange preacher' one evening in the week; we never heard taught any of the doctrines which I had learned when at——.[1] Those with whom I conversed held an Erastian view of the Church of England, and certainly looked to the Reformation as its source. All this seemed to point to the English Church being in schism, a schism which began at the Reformation, and this impression was deepened the more I read Roman Catholic literature. It seemed to me that the only remedy was individual submission to THE Church.

"Then, too, all I had learned while at —— had been so completely satisfying and real that I was led

[1] He refers to the place and church where, as a young man, he learned the rudiments of Catholic faith and worship.

on to look wistfully to Rome for its fulfilment. Gradually I came to think of Rome as the abode of unity in the present; as uninterruptedly linked in unity with the past; as the home of a real and living devotion; and as held together by submission to Authority.

"Alas! Acquaintance with Rome at the centre dispelled this fourfold ideal. I found no real and spiritual unity. There is quite as much difference, to say the least, as among Anglicans, only the differences are about other things. Confession, Presence of the Blessed Sacrament in churches, Masses for the dead, observance of feast and fast—these are of course universal, and there is little difference about them. At the same time it is difficult to know what individual (Roman) Catholics believe about them. I found some devout people believed in them with all the fervour and simplicity of High Churchmen. Others told me they did not believe there was any *Divine* truth in them, but that they held and practised them as pious customs. I had the greatest difficulty in learning what was 'of faith' about Divine Grace. E.g., I was told by my instructor that I certainly need not and could not repudiate my communions in the English Church, nor the historical truth about English Orders. If I was 'in good faith' (I was never able to understand quite what was meant by the expression) I had certainly received, if not the actual Body and Blood of our Lord, the equivalent of Them. And then, after I had been 'received,' the same Father told me that all that belonged to the time *before*

my 'conversion,' and that now I was bound to repudiate all my previous church life! It seemed to me impossible! To say nothing of my communions, how could any mere change in myself affect the validity of English Orders three hundred years before I was born! When I objected, however, I was told that I was indulging a rationalizing spirit, and that the all-sufficing thing was that I had 'made my submission.' From that time onward, though I tried hard to acquiesce and stifle my judgment, I was very unhappy. I seemed to have been duped: but that was not the chief trouble; it seemed very much as though I had denied my Lord.

"Then there were most serious differences of opinion between the Ultramontanists, the Traditionalists, who seem to be looking eagerly towards the English Church, and the Modernists, who are everywhere. You would be amused if I told you the difficulties I had in steering my way amid these mutually contradictory, and most bitter, parties. But in truth it is anything but a laughing matter for those who witness the suspicion and distrust engendered by these differences. Priests are constantly calling upon fellow-priests with the ostensible object of enlisting their sympathy in intellectual difficulties, and then using that sympathy to incriminate them on the score of Modernism. It is as much as any priest's position is worth to sympathize with any brother, however well he may think he knows him, on the score of doubt. There are hundreds of priests travelling the world with this

object alone. Imagine the cipher to which conversation is reduced by the knowledge of this! My own director warned me, when I was leaving Rome, on no account to communicate to him anything in the nature of 'difficulties.' 'Whatever you tell me,' he said, 'is almost sure to betwisted against one of us, possibly both.' I asked whether it were not possible to write 'under seal'? but was told that the Superior as Confessor of the order, regarded all their secrets as his own, employing what is technically called 'confession by anticipation.'

"I tell you this to give you some idea of the habitual suspicion which reigns owing to these different parties. In seminaries and religious houses all letters are opened, and all outgoing letters have to be submitted to a censor. If complaint is made, the blame is laid on the Government officials at the Post Office: always a popular form of scapegoat. The President or Superior promises to represent the matter to Government, and shows the utmost sympathy with the complainant. Meanwhile the latter is a marked man. It is most bewildering. You never know what to talk about, and conversation accordingly degenerates into a sort of ecclesiastical small-talk, which is very small talk indeed.

"And this, I thought bitterly, was that smooth-running unity which I had expected to realize, and for which I had left my birthright in 'the city of confusion'!

"I speak deliberately when I say that there is

an utter absence of anything resembling veracity in the quarters of which I write. 'I suppose you were brought up to regard all falsehood as wrong?' my instructor said to me one day. I told him that I was, and that I was still of that opinion, and that one cause of my submission to Rome had been a doubt whether my position in the English Church was quite honest. He seemed very much amused at this, told me it was quite a delusion, but, he added, a delusion that had saved my soul. According to him, falsehood was only wrong when it aimed at doing harm, and truth was always referable to a standard of opportunism. I am afraid I came too late to his school to learn his lesson. This Father, I should tell you, was not one of the popularly abused Jesuits. He belonged to a different order. There is a sentence towards the end of Tyrrell's *Mediaevalism* which puts the matter exactly as I have unfortunately found it: 'We do not expect to find the Church of Christ governed by methods that are associated with the most cynical forms of Oriental despotism, and that make it impossible to trust the word of an ecclesiastical official who may be speaking, for all we know, only from his "communicable knowledge," or in this capacity or in that capacity, or under this or that mental reservation, or may be even boldly lying with all the license of a diplomatist, and all this in the name of Christ and in the cause of Christianity.'

"Another thing which I went to Rome for and failed to find was the sense of unity with the past. Among my first instructions was the duty of re-

garding the present voice of the Church as all-sufficient. 'It gets rid,' said my instructor, 'of all bother about Christian evidences, and things of that sort. The past doesn't really matter a bit. If the Church decrees a dogma, it is sure to have been in the Church all along, or how could the Church decree it?' I asked him what in that case became of St. Vincent Lerin's rule about making sure that doctrine had been held 'everywhere, at all times, and by all men.' He replied that since St. Vincent's day the Church had come into a more immediate perception of the truth, and that the dogma of the Pope's infallibility dispensed with such cumbersome methods as the 'Vincentian canon.' As I think over his words now, I cannot help being amused; they seem so exactly to hit the mark: from another point of view! What is there that they cannot prove in this way? The only two dogmas on which the Pope has ever delivered himself *ex cathedrâ*, viz., the Immaculate Conception and his own Infallibility, are admittedly not to be found in Scripture, the Fathers, or Tradition. St. Thomas Aquinas was against the former, and St. Gregory was against the latter. But what did that matter? It is claimed that the Church is a *living* voice. We have only to look to the Papal Curia. I heard while in Rome a strange rumour (it seems to me almost incredible, and yet I don't know) that there would shortly be a dogma of the Pope as the Divine Incarnation.[1] Well, the 'living voice' can decree even that!

[1] He was not misinformed. See the following Letter.

"But what, I could not help asking myself, what of the past? What became of St. Thomas Aquinas if the dogma of the Immaculate Conception were a necessary article of faith? what became of all the bishops of Rome who had been unaware of their own infallibility? These things compelled me to return in thought to the Communion I had left behind where the Canon of St. Vincent still held force, where the Church had not taken, so to speak, the bit between its teeth and bolted! I had an uneasy feeling that there must be something radically wrong with a Church that had taken to manufacturing its own doctrine.

"I come to speak of Rome as the home of real and living devotion; and it is here, I think, that my disappointment was keenest. I had been so accustomed, through the writings of Newman and of many Roman Catholic biographies, to expect warmth, life, reality. Many of the books I had gained most from up to the time of my submission (St. Francis de Sales, Nicolas Grou, Walter Hilton, Baron de Renty, St. Philip Neri, Fénelon, and others) had prepared me to find in the Roman Church great spiritual help.

"But, alas! I begin with my First Confession. I had prepared very carefully for it, as I had been accustomed to do at ——. My director told me to put away the paper I had with me, and answer his questions. The questions were not difficult, but it *is* very difficult to give an answer to questions about one's moral life on the spur of the moment. The result was that my Confession was

so confused and inadequate that it required two subsequent Confessions to put things right. I submit that this was not a 'Confession' in any sort. It might be an interrogation, or an inquisition, but a more absolutely unspiritual method of relieving a burdened conscience I cannot imagine!

"Subsequently, my confessions became more and more perfunctory. I found they were expected to be so, and that the thing was regarded as more or less of a form. Often I had visions of that quiet corner in the church at ——, where dear Father C. used to apply God's message of forgiveness to me, and of the deep agitations, and tears with which I told him my sins, and of the relief with which I rose pardoned and renewed (a relief which I never once experienced in Rome) and 'as I thought thereon I wept.'

"Indeed there is inculcated by the Confessors a false fear of spiritual pride which minimizes real contrition. Besides, the deadly thing about it is that the standard of holiness is not character but miracle. The 'Saint' is the person who can be proved to have worked miracles. Compared with this, 'personal holiness' is at a discount. There are few modern Englishmen of such saintly character, judged by the New Testament sense, as John Henry Newman, yet when I asked my instructor whether Newman would ever be canonized, his reply was prompt: 'Oh dear no; impossible to trace any miracle to him.' I thought of him at the College of the Propaganda, and I doubted. Still, of course I knew well enough what the good Father meant.

"As to devotion generally, it would be impossible to deny, and I have no wish to deny, that there is much that is earnest and touching. I spent most of the month of May near the Convent of St. Alfonso, where the Devotions to our Lady were evening by evening thronged with people. But they *were* devotions to our Lady. Our Lord held a quite subsidiary place, except at Benediction at the close. I hope my devotion to the Blessed Sacrament may never diminish, yet I believe there is also a real and immediate approach to our Lord which is absolutely vital to the soul. It is exactly that which I missed. Its place was taken by repetition of Aves and the Titles of our Lady. The book of spiritual exercises given me after my reception consisted almost entirely of devotions to the Blessed Virgin Mary, rendered in the most extravagant terms. The spirit that breathed in the books I had formerly read and used, old English and French Catholic authors, was entirely missing in my experience of 'the real thing.'

"I had often been distressed in my old parish by the perfunctoriness of devotion, but I am bound to say that in Roman Catholic churches as a rule I found something even less like worship. For one thing there is far less uniformity in the Roman ritual and worship than you get in the English Church, and I suppose this 'puts one off' at first. I never could adapt myself to the 'pic-nic' conditions under which worship is conducted amongst them. I cannot think that one can worship without some slight preparation, or profitably sit or lounge through

what remains, following the movements of the priest, without any voice to control or inspire. I found I had to throw aside all I had learnt of the symbolic aids to worship at ——, and the help they had proved to me. Every Sunday I found myself longing for the *united* worship of an Anglican Church. And then the sermons! how one missed the insight into the meaning of our Lord's words in the Gospels, and the comparison of Scripture with Scripture! Occasionally, one did pick up a crumb or two to help one through the week; but the themes usually dealt with were the Saints, the duty of hearing Mass, Penance, and the state of the souls in Purgatory; and then, of course, in England, the eternal polemic of Rome's supremacy and England's apostasy. I used to love to think that England was the dowry of Mary, and do still, but I don't want to hear it every Sabbath day! Speaking as a whole it struck me that the devotions of Rome were on too narrow a beam to carry the universal soul of man.

"It is a pity they know so little of us, and refuse to learn more. The most ludicrous ideas as to the English Church pass current even in high quarters in Rome. They believe the altar is still brought down into the nave of an English Church; that all the bishops deny the Real Presence; that communicants receive sitting, and treat the Holy Eucharist as a meal. If any one tries to put them right, they acquiesce for the moment, and then the next day he will probably hear the same travesties repeated without hesitation or scruple. But they do not

want to know the truth. Of what use is it? What opportunity does it serve?

"I do not think that English priests who 'go over' are at all aware of the way in which they must sink their judgment on all matters, moral as well as intellectual, to the level of those they find themselves with. This I believe accounts for the swift degeneration of the majority who go. A Roman priest once said to a friend of mine: 'I have known many of your men come over to us, but I have never known one who has been improved by it.'

"I must not write any more. I went to the Catholic life centring in the Chair of Peter looking to find enthusiasm, a life permeated with devotion, a real love of souls and a real effort to understand them, a welcome for the convert, and a refuge for the sinner; in the words of one who had long led me on, 'the desire of the eyes, the joy of the heart, the truth after many shadows, the fulness after many foretastes, the home after many storms': I came, and the dream ended and the light was quenched. Ah, how different, this real Rome, from the city of my dream, and *his*!

"Oh, how I rejoice to have found now that the claim of Rome is as unsubstantial as the mirage that attracted me thither! How thankful I am to be back again in the dear English Church which with all its faults (and I am just as sensible of them as I was in past years) has never broken with the Constitution laid down by Christ, and is still blest by Him with the love of truth, honour, sympathy, and, above everything else, of Himself."

XI

The "Living Voice"

I SHOULD disregard all "deadness of feeling." Can you expect to feel as you tell me you used to do years ago, when you have "been undergoing a strain that has occupied every waking moment"? Be thankful for that "utter peace," that "unquestioning faith" you used to enjoy. Personally, I distrust feeling in religion very much, but if the reality of past days has made such a deep impression on you, you do well to remember it just now. Of course you "cannot repudiate your Communions"! How could you? And don't be misled by what your Roman friends tell you about those experiences merely resulting from the fact that you were "in good faith," and that "the real thing" will "infinitely transcend them." I own that subtleties of that kind do make me very angry, because it is impossible to test them till you have begged the question and "gone over"! Let one who did take the step and found all the joy and reality of his communions vanish, warn you against that insidious temptation.

No; I would earnestly remind you of what I said at the beginning of my last letter. There are times

when "mere obedience" is the only anchor that holds: times of darkness and distraction and contrary longings, when the only little ray of gladness for the heart is to hear Him say "Do this in remembrance of Me," and to *do* it, though dryness and bitterness of soul are not to be denied. It is enough that our Saviour says "Come," and if we cannot "come" without bringing with us all the hard and unsightly nature that is so unworthy of Him, we must bring it with us, and rely on His Power to melt it out of us by the fire of His Love.

And do not, if I may say so, take overmuch stock of "motive" and "states of consciousness." Isn't it enough to say "Try me, O God, and search the ground of my heart?" Let God search. I think that to say "Look well if there be any way of wickedness in me, and lead me in the way everlasting," and then go on, content that *He* is sifting and saving, is to live that life of dependence on Himself which our Lord taught above everything.

It is a good plan, whenever we are tempted to think overmuch of "motive" and that kind of thing, to fix our thoughts on some one perfection in our Lord's character. Do not so much turn *from yourself*, as *to Him*.

And now as to the question you asked me a little while ago: what authority can *we* show compared with that of Rome? I confess, I think that much confusion exists in our minds between authority, and the *exercise* of authority. You and others seem to speak as though there were no authority in the English Church. There is precisely as much

authority in the English Church as there is in the Church Universal. There are the Creeds, representing the historic Christian consciousness, and there is in the Episcopate and the priesthood the Holy Spirit of God mediating the Presence of the Lord throughout the Church—the Lord Who said: "All Authority is given unto Me in Heaven and in earth." The Holy Spirit throughout the whole Church is "the Living Voice," the "Infallible Guide."

Then, quite distinct from this, comes the *manner* in which the authority is *exercised*. And this, I think, is where your difficulty really lies. Nothing is plainer, from the records of Christ and His Apostles, than the fact that authority is to be exercised suasively, not by coercion. When do you find our Lord employing any means that would interfere with the freedom of man's response to Him? That freedom constituted and still constitutes the principal element in what we may reverently call the problem of redemption. You often hear it asked, e.g., "why does not God do away with sin?" "why doesn't He make all men good?" And the answer of course is that He could do so, but that He has made man a free being, capable of becoming only what he elects to become by his free choice; and that to make man good would be to *un*make him as man. Throughout nature there is plenty of obedience of the coercive sort, but in the moral and spiritual sphere, to which man belongs, the very condition of obedience is freedom. And so, as I say, the "problem" of redemption is to win man

back to his allegiance to God by eliciting his free choice in response to the Love of God in Christ.

I cannot but think that, in her coercive exercise of authority, Rome overlooks this great principle. Take, e.g., the official definition of "authority" as given us by Fr. Richardson[1]: "Authority is the absolute peremptory power from which there is no appeal, exercised by a living existing voice, commanding the assent of the intellect in God's Name, and speaking as God's instrument." Read that definition carefully till you are sure of having grasped what Rome means by authority, and then compare it with all that is revealed of the mind and method of Christ in the Holy Gospels.

Is it not clear that such an "absolute peremptory power from which there is no appeal" must destroy that freedom which is of the very essence of the obedience our Lord looks for? To what sort of life could such absolutism lead? To the life of an automaton. Both in faith and practice, a man would find himself the puppet of so many decrees. Reflection would become superfluous; judgment positively perilous; the experience of the past (for it is difficult to understand how any one so bound could have any experience of his own worth calling such) would go for nothing. It is not merely Scripture that becomes negligible; it is Creed as well. If I am to live and move and have my being under "an absolute peremptory power from which there is no appeal, commanding the assent of the intellect in God's Name," of what concern can any

[1] *What are the Catholic Claims?* p. 51.

Creed be to me? I remind you of what my friend found in the letter I enclosed in my last: I do not need the Past if I have the Pope.

Do you not see the hopeless position we are brought to by building upon the foundation of one apostle only! To Peter alone and his successors it is given according to this view to "govern the Church with the self-same government as Jesus Christ." What follows from this false start? a false issue, viz. the infallibility of One Man; "an absolute peremptory power from which there is no appeal." Here is an end of any conciliar action of the Apostolic Church meeting together to deliberate on questions of faith and practice, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. One wonders why our Lord ever promised that "He (the Paraclete) shall guide *you* (plural) into all the truth"! why did He not make the promise to Peter, the official Vicar? why should He make it at all? was it not enough to invest Peter with plenipotentiary powers, and leave the guidance of the Church to him? And why should the Church have met together from the very first to deliberate over matters inviting settlement? and why should Peter have been "withstood" by another apostle at the Council of Antioch? and not only opposed but censured? and how is it that this investiture of one person with infallibility should never have been made an article of faith till the year 1870? and then only after strenuous opposition on the part of members of the Roman Catholic Church itself? I wish you would read on this chapters XVI–XVIII of Dr. Sparrow Simp-

son's *Papal Infallibility*, where the opposition of Romanists to the dogma is carefully recounted.[1] Surely, if the doctrine of an "absolute peremptory power" holds good at all, we should expect to find it defined from the first, since everything else must rest upon it!

And what does it really lead to? For we have not reached the end of it with the dogma of an infallible Pope. The only logical end of it is belief in the Pope as the Incarnation of God Himself. You will say that I am carrying things further than Rome. I do not think so. In 1904 there appeared a tract by Arséne Pierre Milet, Curé Doyen de la Roë, in the diocese of Laval, having the imprimatur of the Archbishop of Tours. This tract was dedicated to the late Pope. Its subject was "Devotion to the Pope." It actually applies to the Pope the words of St. Matthew xii. 30, "Thou shalt love (Him) with all thy heart and with all thy mind and with all thy soul and with all thy strength." In it occur these words:

"One may say that as the Tabernacle is the home of Jesus the Victim, so the Palace of the Vatican at Rome is the Home of Jesus the Teacher. . . . When we prostrate ourselves before the Tabernacle we adore the Lord in His Eucharistic Presence; when we fall at the Pope's feet, it is again Jesus Christ Whom we adore in His doctrinal Presence. In both cases we adore and confess the same Jesus Christ. Whence it follows by rigorous consequence that it is as impossible to be a good Christian without devotion to the Pope, as it is to be a good Christian without devotion to the Eucharist. . . . If then we truly love the

[1] London, John Murray. 1909.

Pope nothing will be dearer to us than His Will. . . . Every objection will be silenced (*s'évanouira*) every hesitation will yield before this unanswerable argument; *God wills and commands it because the Pope wills and commands it.* Let us enter into the joys of the Pope."

How does that strike you as an instance of the "absolute peremptory power from which there is no appeal"? You are probably shocked, and inclined to regard it as the devotion of a simple-minded Breton priest gone mad. Then let me tell you that Cardinal Merry del Val, writing to its author, expresses the Pope's entire satisfaction with it as "dictated by that spirit of intelligent piety which indicates a true Catholic and an exemplary priest."

This is the doctrine of the Grand Llama of Thibet in a Western form. Is there anything less like the spirit of Christ, of Peter and his co-apostles, of Clement, or Ignatius, or Justin, or Irenæus, or Cyprian, or Gregory? Read again some of those previous letters of mine, if you have chanced to keep them, and tell me whether you do not think that every one of the great bishops and builders of the Church there mentioned, even Hildebrand himself, would not have stood aghast at the late Pope's action in accepting the language of the Curé Doyen de la Roë.

Where is the source of the error? where is the

[1] For an account of the whole transaction, with references, see the "note" at the end of Tyrrell's *Mediaevalism*, p. 71, where he says: "I admit the logic of it all, but where is it to end? Have we yet to learn the immaculate conception of the Pope, or his real presence on the Altar?"

false premiss? well, we have the Petrine Claim as the root and centre of the whole muddle; but a Petrine Claim was not of much use without the *kind* of authority to fit it. And having inquired into the historical worth of the Petrine Claim we shall do well to mark the spiritual worth of the kind of authority associated with it. The fact is "an absolute peremptory power" was not the kind of power which our Lord chose whereby to centre our minds and affections and wills on Himself. That is the second great source of error. An "absolute peremptory power" might be necessary to hold together the old empire of Rome. It may even be necessary, in some modified form, for imperial purposes to-day. It is quite in accord with all we read of the temporal power of the Papacy, every known act of which power was a refutation of its right to rule. But it is not the spiritual nexus by which Christians are bound together in the Body of Christ. Christ has no use for it, nor has the Church. It leaves out of account two-thirds of human nature—experience and reason. The spiritual consciousness is controlled and developed on three sides equally, on the side of authority, and of experience, and of reason. And anything that disturbs the balance of these three in their influence on the soul is disastrous.

You will, I think, admit my point, when you glance at the other two elements in our spiritual life, and mark how men have tried to build upon one of them only. You have no hesitation, e.g., about the wrong-headedness of the rationalist who brings everything to the one test of the reason.

You tell him that he must admit the claim of experience, for life is much larger than reason. You tell him he must admit authority of some kind, since he is indebted for a large portion of his stock of knowledge to the teaching he has received. You do not hesitate to tell the people who try to form a sect on the similarity of their experiences that they cannot even do so without reflecting and reasoning upon their experience, and they cannot hand down their tenets unless they employ some measure of authority in teaching their children. Do you not see, then, that the Romanist's treatment of authority is just as one-sided, just as calculated to cripple and maim the full growth of the soul, as the rationalist's treatment of reason, or the Muggletonians' vagaries of "experience"? The very wording of Fr. Richardson's definition ought to show us what a one-sided development his treatment of authority produces; his "absolute peremptory power" commands "the assent of the *intellect* in God's name": as if, when you had secured the assent of the *intellect*, your task was done. You may command the assent of my intellect to the idea that black is white; yet you cannot make me believe it. My reason tells me that black is not white, though I be told it is "in God's Name"; and my experience shows me that when I touch pitch I am defiled.

I am not disparaging intellectual assent to the truths of religion; I am not implying that reason and experience are in opposition to them; I am not denying the function of authority in teaching and

in regulating belief; I simply affirm that the God-given elements in our spiritual development must go on side by side, and that you cannot exalt one of them at the expense of the others without undoing the work of God in His appeal to the response of our whole nature.

I wish you would read the first eighty pages of Baron von Hügel's *Mystical Element in Religion*, where all that I am trying to say here about the true place and function of authority in religion is so admirably stated and illustrated.

The fact is, Roman absolutism has its root in the mediaeval conception of the State, a conception which has long since passed away. No more mischievous error was ever made than that of incorporating a temporary political measure into the constitution of the Church! And here I want to recommend one more book to you. I wish you would ponder Dr. Figgis' *Churches in the Modern State*, especially Lecture IV on "Ultramontanism." No more searching criticism of the Ultramontanist principle of the abnormal concentration of the whole religious life on the single point of authority has ever been made. There you will see the thing itself, stripped of its endless and futile Petrine controversy, and shown up as one of the great detrimental issues which from time to time in the history of the race have blocked the path of religious advance, like the Pharisaism that crushed the free spirit of Israel's response to God.

Let us then put out of our minds the strained and partial definition of authority native to Rome.

Fix your mind on the due place which authority does occupy in the English Church. Begin with the instrument of continuity, so to speak, the Ministry, and consider how all those ministering in the Church from the bishops downwards are ordered by authority; consider how the sacraments are binding upon all who would be faithful; and the Creeds; and public worship. Now these four things, the Ministry, the Sacraments, the Creeds, and Worship, comprehend the whole of the *institutional* part of religion. It follows, then, that authority is co-extensive with all our outward religious acts; and there is, in addition, the authority of the priest in the guidance of souls, and in the more general work of his ministry.

"Yes, but," I hear you saying, "what means have we of insisting upon all this? what penalties can we exact? how can we bring authority to *bear* on those who disregard their ministers, or are indifferent to their duties, or reject portions of the Creed, or hold them in a private sense?" At any rate, I hope you *are* making this objection, for it is the very point to which I wanted to bring you. I am sure that what you and others who are "unsettled" have at the back of your minds when you talk of authority is some coercive measure for compelling faith or settling disputes. Is not this so? You want a process for ejecting the unfaithful? Your real quarrel with the Church is not on the score of a want of authority, but of a want of excommunication? And my reply is that the machine for rooting up the tares and leaving the wheat has not yet been

discovered. You say Rome has discovered it. I do not think so. I know of no machine so prolific in its encouragement of tares as Roman excommunication. When I think of the enormous advertisement which Roman excommunications have given almost all kinds of error and irregularity, how they have enlisted on the side of the erring those who, without them, would probably have died in ignorance of such errors; how they have strengthened the headstrong in their obstinacy, and given heresy a vogue which it would otherwise never have enjoyed, I find myself almost reverencing the powers of darkness for the consummate malice of their invention!

Excommunication is automatic. The man who wilfully tampers with the Creed or rejects the Sacraments thereby puts himself spiritually beyond the pale. "They went out from us, for they were not of us." There is no need openly to censure such. Error is its own penalty. If the Church is the repository of Divine grace, then those who break with the Church *ipso facto* forfeit the grace. Moreover, what court would be capable of judging so nicely as to discriminate between the many stages and kinds of doubt on the one hand, and open and wilful unbelief on the other? Only Divine grace can discriminate between doubt and wilful rejection of the truth, and withdraw from the latter just as health withdraws from the diseased. Perhaps you say: But the person thus left a nominal member of the Church will infect the rest. Well, but if you censure him as a heretic will he

not just as surely infect the rest? and have a great deal more scope for doing so? Is not one heretic enough without a correspondence in the *Daily Telegraph*? It has been proved in the past that to turn men out of the Church is to provide them with a far more influential pulpit than they had when in it. Again, you may say: does not this interfere with the Visibility of the Church? Not at all; the very purpose of the parables of the Field and the Net was to illustrate the visibility of the Church, and in the one case there were tares as well as wheat, and in the other bad fish as well as good.

But then, you say, what is the use of showing up error, of agitating for its removal, or of anything that comes under the head of "earnestly contending for the Faith"? I reply that this is part of the function of the teaching Church. I think a good example of this is given by the resolution of the Lambeth Conference of 1908: "This Conference, in view of tendencies shown in the writings of the present day, hereby places on record its conviction that the *historical* facts stated in the Creeds are an *essential* part of the Faith of the Church." Such re-affirmation of the Faith is necessary from time to time, and is, in fact, part of the continuous "prophetic office" of the Church.

Then, you go on to urge, you would not have a bishop suspend a priest who is teaching heresy? *Suspend* him, certainly. It is difficult to see how a bishop could proceed otherwise, since the priest has failed to carry out his vow to "banish and drive

away all erroneous and strange doctrines." He has broken his contract, and his term of service ends. But this is a different thing from excommunicating him. If he has been teaching heresy from love of it, he *is* outside the operation of grace already, and must remain so till repentance has restored him. The priest, however, may have been teaching in ignorance, and in that case, while he is manifestly unfitted to teach, he is not out of communion, nor would any pronouncement of "authority" make him so.

It seems to me that we need a much more spiritual conception of authority than is in the minds of those who are constantly clamouring for the application of the screw. We are too prone to forget the supernatural character of the Church, and to lean to that material and political travesty of it which has resulted in such frightful disaster to the Body of Christ. The very certainty of the Faith and the earnestness with which Truth inspires us have their temptations towards the persecuting spirit, and our concrete minds are naturally apt to narrow down the Kingdom to purposes of mere classification. I cannot help thinking that a humbler regard for that which constitutes authority in the Church, viz., the revelation of God Himself, should make us at once less ready to condemn, and less confident of our own opinion.

Will you bear this in mind: that during the first three centuries, when there was nothing even resembling the claim to external authority put forward by Rome to-day, the Church was undivided?

Would you in those days have pressed for an external authority? I think not. You are moved to do so at the sight of "our unhappy divisions," from the vain thought that the application of a coercive authority would heal them. But read your history again, and you will confess that it is exactly such application of authority that has multiplied and widened divisions.

Surely it should be enough for you, in the way of authority, that you are

"living your religious life, not as an individual, but as the member of a great society, a spiritual body in communion with Christ; to feel that you have behind your beliefs an authority, not of a machine, not of an organization which may promote its views by the application of physical force, but of the spiritual influence of a living body of Christian men." [1]

This was enough for Polycrates, Cyprian, Gregory; but

"superimposed upon this has grown up the spirit represented by Romanism. It represents an institution rather than a life. It fears what is intellectual; it checks spontaneity. While it appears to exhibit the strength of an organized action, it has in reality the inherent weakness of destroying the religious life out of which it rises.

"And what has Rome done? It has steadily undermined the religious life of all countries in which it was strong. It has succeeded in alienating the laity with the exception of those who are willing absolutely to submit. It has succeeded in suppressing the discussion of truth. Against the advice of Newman and Döllinger and many

[1] Dr. A. C. Headlam, "Newman," *Church Quarterly Review*, July, 1912.

other names which carry weight, the dogma of Papal infallibility has been decreed, and one by one every movement for restoring religious life in the Latin countries has failed. It has had many opportunities. In Newman it had the greatest religious asset of the nineteenth century, and it could make no use of him. Since his time the story has been the same. Lord Halifax's narrative of his mission to Rome teaches us that Rome has not changed. It has never learnt wisdom because it thinks itself wise." [1]

After this, I do not think I need answer at any length that question of your friend, who, you say, has seen some of my former letters. You tell me he observed: If he is so far a Catholic, why does he not become one altogether? why does he not make his submission? My reply is that if I did "make my submission" I should cease to be a Catholic and become a Roman Catholic; if I "made my submission" I should be embracing the one thing *in spite of which* the Roman is a Catholic; I should be taking into the Catholicism which I thank God I have, an alien product, a thing compounded of Roman imperialism, and mediaeval statecraft; I should be making difficulty endlessly more difficult by submitting to terms which Romans themselves only find tolerable so far as they can disregard them. I do, and will to my life's end, adore our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, and honour His Holy Mother, and appeal to the Saints, and seek Absolution from my priest, and offer the Holy Sacrifice for the souls in Purgatory; I will by God's grace live the full life that every Catholic is privileged to do, but I will

[1] Dr. A. C. Headlam, "Newman," *Church Quarterly Review*, July, 1912.

live it in communion with the bishop who is set over me in Christ, and not with a bishop who has no jurisdiction amongst us; and I will live it in communion with my bishop because he, with others, is in rightful succession to those Apostles to whom Christ gave, as "messengers, watchmen and stewards," the oversight of His Church till He shall come again.

XII

Last Words

THE questions you raise are by no means irrelevant, and while I am thankful to know that your mind is at rest on the real point at issue, I certainly think you are wise to let no "after-thought" go unchallenged.

You ask me "how it is, if Rome is so corrupt at the centre, she shows so much life and such good life at the circumference." I think the answer turns on what you mean by the "centre"; whether you mean the centre of the Papal system, or the centre of her Catholic life. I do not believe for one moment that the Vatican and the Curia represent the centre of her Catholic life. I believe the undeniable spiritual life manifested by Roman Catholics in this and other countries has its source in Jesus Christ. "The gifts and calling of God are without repentance," and where Divine grace is taken and used in good faith, the results of grace are achieved. In a word, Roman Catholics are what they are in spite of their Romanism.

Dr. Figgis has a most suggestive passage on this

subject.[1] He distinguishes between theory and practice. He says:

"In practice, a doctrine so deeply at variance with the facts of life (as the claims of the Papacy) is less dangerous than appears. For human nature always goes on, even if you deny that it exists, and the actual Roman communion, made up of many peoples, nations and languages, containing innumerable guilds and societies, and countless orders and fellowships, and embracing churches of the most diverse intellectual and emotional climate, stretching in unbroken continuity through the centuries—that body has within her exhaustless springs of beauty, and flowers of a rich and overflowing piety. . . . Yet it remains the case that the Roman theory is false."

They do not draw their strength and sweetness from that theory. They draw their strength and sweetness from their devotion to Christ and His Mother and the Saints. And if you ask: Then why could not we, joining them, share these results of grace? I reply that we could not do so in good faith. If they would suffer us to go among them without acknowledging their theory, how gladly would we do so! But this they will not suffer us to do. They themselves are in perfect good faith in acknowledging that theory, for the majority of them have been brought up in entire ignorance of the historical origins of that theory. But it would be impossible for us, knowing what we do, to subscribe it. We must rejoice in the excellence they show, and humbly try to follow their example as far as we ought, praying earnestly for the day when the arbitrary barriers erected by statecraft shall dis-

[1] *Churches in the Modern State*, pp. 152–3.

appear and leave us to work out our common Catholic life side by side.

And this brings me to your second question, which I own is a very difficult one to answer. You ask: What ought to be our attitude towards Roman Catholics in this country? I think the question is best answered when we consider the one that immediately follows in your letter: viz., What are the chances of re-union? It seems to me that re-union is impossible while the Petrine Claim is maintained. Remember that by the "Petrine Claim" I mean that which I described in my second letter in the actual words of the Roman Catechism. So long as they maintain that the Pope, as the successor of St. Peter, is "the Vicar of Jesus Christ, the Visible Head of the Church on earth, governing the Church with the self-same authority as Jesus Christ," re-union cannot come; for we could only admit that Claim by denying the true apostolic equality of the churches within the Church. Well, then, that being the case, it follows that their presence in our midst is an intrusion. They set up a rival altar built on claims that have long been exposed as fraudulent, and while we find much in their worship and practice and life which is very like the Catholic religion, and which commends itself to us, what *can* be our attitude under the circumstances? Must it not be one of sorrowful aloofness? Are we not bound, if we have good grounds for our existence as English Churchmen, to regard this rival body as, in the phrase of Archbishop Benson, "the Italian Mission"? What other posi-

tion can we take up? We do not take it up in anger or hatred. We do not even wish to exclude them from our altars: provided they recognize our altars, and acknowledge that the Church is Apostolic and not Petrine. But the very fact that they come over here, and set up their altars and deny us communion is, I think, a sufficient indication of the attitude we have to take. No doubt their services appeal to us (there is every reason why our own should do so equally and even more) but we cannot get away from the fact that by participating in those services so far as we are tolerated, we are reflecting upon our own position as Catholics. No doubt they will admit us into their institutions, and show us their methods, and impress us with their charitable silence as to the things that divide us, but all that we see and admire is in reality the most insolent denial of our own heritage in the Catholic Church. Let them relinquish a position which the enlightened minds amongst them know to be untenable, and they will see with what eagerness we shall mingle before one Throne of Grace. Until then, the responsibility for the schism rests entirely with them. We have the apostolic succession, the sacraments, the creeds, the Scriptures, the Fathers —all that Catholics have ever had to constitute them a part of the Church, and we shall do well to abide in our calling, and quietly ignore the pretensions raised against us.

I am enclosing with this a brief list of the more popular and easily procurable books on the controversy for the purpose of recommendation to your

friends. I have purposely excluded from the list those which are purely "controversial," and are simply "briefs" for our own position. Just one word on this subject before I pass to the more personal part of what I want to say. In your task of helping others to share the resolution of your own doubts, you will find a good deal of unwillingness to read and study, and I would emphasize the fact that it *is* a matter for study, and that no abiding rest will be secured without some genuine effort to grapple with the problems it presents. You will frequently find people saying: "I am not a student; I simply want to know what are the rights of the matter without having to wade through treatises or weigh evidence." Or they will say "I have no time for reading; what are the facts?" This is a very tantalizing condition to deal with, because persons who have not time or inclination for study should be content to accept the faith in which they are brought up. Having commenced inquiry, they should be prepared to go through with it. If they do not want the trouble of investigation, they should be content with the Faith as it has been taught them. Rome, of course, is not slow to work upon this reluctance to study. She has her "religion of the *plain* man," and offers to set doubt at rest for ever with the Penny Catechism and one text out of the Gospels, and we are constantly told of "the ease with which Rome can set out her Claim." Yes, ease indeed, *if inquiry is not wanted.* So too can the English Church set forth its claim with ease: under the same conditions. But once

inquiry is set up, Rome has to review the ages no less than England. She has a position to make good to all who will not take her on her own valuation.

There is no short cut to religious certainty for the inquiring mind. Those who seem never to question the grounds of their faith are usually those who have had a careful grounding in childhood: which is only another way of saying that investigation is behind them. There can be no question that such grounding is a great need in the English Church, or, rather, has been in the past. Our children have been well taught as a whole in the Bible, but they have not been taught elementary truths about the apostolic Church. Had they been, we should not have the amount of unsettlement and ignorance which we are face to face with to-day. Here also you can use your influence in the parish and amongst your friends. The important thing is to give children a grounding in the structure of the Faith, especially that part of it which has to do with the constitution of the Church; the great principles of the Bible will fall into line afterwards. If the whole Bible is the record of a Divine revelation culminating in the Church, it will very soon be assimilated to an elementary acquaintance with the facts about the Church.

However, I am going rather afield: our task in helping others to be settled in the church of their baptism lies in encouraging them to study and guiding their reading. And in these days when the best books on the subject are easily accessible, it ought not to be a very difficult thing for men and

women even of scanty leisure to obtain a knowledge of the facts.

And now as to yourself; you have been passing through a time of great stress. Thank God, it has resulted not merely in reassurance as to your position in the Catholic Church, but in a deeper insight into the purpose of the Church, and of your individual relationship with Christ through the Church. You have not doubted and inquired in vain. Do not be distressed if you find the unrest recurring under some provocation or other. It is almost certain that you who have felt so deeply will feel deeply again. If it should be so, remember the points which you have really got clear, viz., the apostolicity of the English Church, the validity of our Orders and the reality of the Sacraments amongst us; and cling to these facts in humble obedience till the causes of irritation shall have passed away.

For the rest, "let yourself go" in the positive Catholic atmosphere of the English Church—in worship, in intercourse, and in some work for our Lord which will do more than anything else to take you out of yourself, and make you forget petty distractions. Be as simple as you can in your religion, and bring everything that worries you to our Lord. He is the Centre. In Him alone is peace.

> Pax sine crimine, pax sine turbine, pax sine rixâ;
> Meta laboribus, atque tumultibus, anchora fixa.

APPENDIX

A List of Books on the subject of the foregoing Letters, easily accessible to the general reader.

I. On the whole Subject:—

Denny, Edward: *Papalism*, a Treatise on the Claims of the Papacy as set forth in the Encyclical *Satis Cognitum*. London, Rivingtons, 1912.

Gore, Charles, Bishop of Oxford: *Roman Catholic Claims*. London, Longmans & Co.

Simpson, W. J. Sparrow, D.D.: *Papal Infallibility*. London, John Murray.

Littledale, R. F., D.D.: *The Petrine Claims*. London, S.P.C.K.

II. On the Catholicity of the English Church:—

Adderley, The Rev. the Hon. J.: *The Catholicism of the Church of England*. London, Francis Griffiths.

Gore, Bp.: *R.C. Claims*, chapter x.

Church Historical Society's Publications (S.P.C.K.), especially Nos. (in Catalogue of Society) 48, 71, 1619, 79, 8, 28, 22, 14, 1, 15, 18, 51, 17, 55, 6, 31, 50, 3, 41, 23, 35.

Cecil & Clayton: *Our National Church*. London, Frederick Warne & Co., 1s.

Grafton, Chas. C. (Bp. of Fond du Lac): *Christian and Catholic*. Longmans, Green & Co., chaps. viii–xiii.

Watson, E. W.: *The Church of England*. Williams & Norgate, 1s. (particularly chs. iii–v).

Mason, A. J.: *What Changes were made at the English*

Reformation? Church Historical Society, Tract II. S.P.C.K.

Moore, Aubrey: *History of the English Reformation.*

Puller, F. W.: *The Relation of the English Church to the Monarchical Claims of the Roman See.* Modern Oxford Tracts, 1*s.*

Staley, Vernon: *The Catholic Religion,* Pt. II. chs. i–v.

Wakeman, H. O.: *The Reformation in Great Britain.* Oxford Church Text Books, Rivingtons, 1*s.*

Riley, Athelstan: *Anglican Theory of the Catholic Church.* Mowbray & Co., 2*d.*

Baverstock, A. H.: *Doctrina Anglicanensium, or, the Church of England and the Position of the Blessed Virgin Mary.* London, Catholic Literature Association, 2*d.*

Relation to Nonconformity:—

Sparrow Simpson, W. J.: *Relation of the English Church to Non-Episcopal Communions.* Modern Oxford Tracts, 1*s.*

Gore, Charles: *Orders and Unity.* London, John Murray, ch. vi.

III. English Orders:—

Denny, E.: *Anglican Orders.* Rivingtons.

Gore, Chas.: *R.C. Claims,* ch. ix.

Puller, F. W.: *The Edwardine Ordinal.* Ch. Hist. Soc., Tract XVI.

Grafton, Bp.: *Christian and Catholic,* ch. xi.

Brightman, F. E.: *What Objections have been made to English Orders?* Ch. Hist. Soc., Tract VI.

Church Hist. Soc.: Tract XIV (examination of the *Satis Cognitum*).

IV. Authority:—

Von Hügel, Baron: *Mystical Element of Religion, The,* I, pp. 1–90 (on the position of Authority in conjunction with reason and experience).

Mahan, J. K.: *Exercise of Faith.* London, J. G. Palmer, 1877. Pp. 68 ff.

Wood, E. G.: *Regal Power of the Church.*
Law, William: *First Letter to the Bishop of Bangor.* Works, 1762, I, pp. 20, 31. Quoted in Sadler's *Church Doctrine, Bible Truth,* Notes to ch. v.

V. History of the Papal Claim:—
Denny: (see above) chs. i., v., vi.
Gore: (above) chs. vi., vii.
Creighton, Mandell: *History of the Papacy.* Longmans & Co., vol. i. ch. i.
Bright, William: *The Roman See in the Early Church,* Lect. I. Longmans & Co.
Puller, F. W.: *The Primitive Saints and the See of Rome,* Lects. IV, V. Longmans & Co. (For "the Roman See *not* the necessary condition of membership in the Catholic Church," see Lects. VI, VII.)
Figgis, J. N.: *Churches in the Modern State,* Lect. IV.—for general criticism of the Roman development. Longmans & Co.
Browne, G. F.: *On what are the Papal Claims founded?* Ch. Hist. Soc., Tract IV.

VI. Relation of St. Peter to the Church at Rome:—
Denny, E.: (as above) xiii., xiv.
Edmundson, G.: *The Church in Rome in the First Century,* Lects. II, III, VI. Longmans & Co.
Turner, C. H.: *Studies in Early Church History.* See under index headings, "Peter," "Rome," "Popes." Oxford, Clarendon Press.

VII. The Papalist Doctrine of the Supremacy of Peter:—
Denny, E.: (above) chs. ii., iii., iv., xxi.
Gore, C.: (above) ch. v.
Sparrow Simpson, W. J.: *Papal Infallibility,* ch. i.
Puller, F. W.: *The Primitive Saints, etc.,* Lect. III, and Notes C, D.
Grafton, Bp.: *Christian and Catholic,* chs. xiv.–xvii.
Stone, Darwell: *Outlines of Christian Dogma,* pp. 117–121.

Liddon, H. P.: *Life and Letters*, pp. 93–96, 126–128, 192–194, 338–340.
Gore, C.: *The Church and the Ministry*, p. 5, *n* 222–226, 230. 167–169.

VIII. Papal Infallibility:—
Sparrow Simpson, W. J.: *Papal Infallibility* (the doctrine stated), ch. xix.; (absence of any evidence in the Fathers), chs. ii.–vi.
(Opposition to the dogma among Roman Catholics themselves), chs. x.–xiv.
(history of the decree), chs. xv.–xviii.
Stone, Darwell.: *Outlines of Christian Dogma*, pp. 140–145.
Collins, W. E.: *Position of the Pope in England in the Middle Ages.* Ch. Hist. Soc., Tract III.

IX. Modern Romanism:—
Frere, W. H.: *Position of the Roman Catholic Body in England.* Ch. Hist. Soc., Tract V.
Halifax, Lord: *Leo XIII and Anglican Orders.* Longmans & Co.
Lacey, T. A.: *A Roman Diary, and other Documents relating to the Papal Inquiry into English Ordinations*, 1896.
Gore, C.: (above) ch. xi.
Tyrrell, Fr.: *Mediaevalism* (a comment on the present position and outcome of the Roman Claim).

X. Miscellaneous:—
Calvet, J.: *L'Abbé Gustave Morel*, tr. E. J. I. Dredge (impressions of English Catholicism at close of nineteenth century.)
Roberts, Bayfield: *History of the English Church Union* (a record of the recovery of Catholic practice since the 'fifties, and successful resistance to state-intrusion).
Ditto, *The Roman Question.* Tracts. C.L.A. (particularly No. 2 on the "living voice").
Wirgman, Ven. Arch.: *Foreign Protestantism within the Church of England.* C.L.A. 1*s.* (a convincing state-

ment that protestant doctrine, as popularly held in the English Church, *is* a foreign element).

The Return from Rome, by a Priest. Mirfield Manuals, 1*d.* (contains many shrewd observations arising out of personal experience of the English Church and of Rome).

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